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THE FOURTH YEAR

THE hands of the clock marked the moment of time at which we passed from the third year of this war to the fourth, but nothing else on any of its many fronts suggested a crisis or a climax. A series of unanswerable questions confronts us and it is hard to guess, even in dim outline, the shape of events during the coming year. Even the foreground of the next three months is dimly lit. Will the Russians still hold Stalingrad when the first snows fall and weary regiments sigh for warmth and winter quarters? Can the Alpine troops from the Tyrol scale the Caucasus, or creep round it to Baku? Can Rommel's talent for attack force the formidable lines at El Alamein, where Alexander holds the road to the Delta and the Canal? Does MacArthur at length command the resources adequate for a determined offensive from the periphery against the new island-empire of Japan? Few of us would venture to answer any of these questions with assurance. Behind them lurk others of a more general nature which are hardly less puzzling. The facts about the German war upon our commerce are hidden from us—more strictly hidden than wisdom would counsel. We may pay little attention to the boasts of the enemy's wireless bulletins, but it is known on American authority that the ships of the United Nations are being sunk faster than their yards can replace them. In the total silence that has settled upon the seas, the public does not even know whether the tendency of our casualties is upwards or downwards or how far the better handling of convoys by the U.S.A. will solve that problem. Again, though Mr. Donald Nelson has admitted that American industry has not reached the target-totals at which he aimed, it would be a mistake to dwell on this confession, for the figures which the President set for it were extravagantly high. The real ground for anxiety lies not in the fact that the accomplishment lags behind the estimate, but rather in the shortage of raw materials, serious in the case of aluminium and steel, and graver still in the case of rubber.

If there is much that we do not know about our own case, the difficulty of guessing the enemy's plight is almost insuperable. He can still advance whenever he concentrates for the purpose. But his aim has grown more modest. Last year he attacked simultaneously along the whole line from Leningrad to Rostov. This year he has been content with the Southern offensive, extensive though this is. It would be going too far to suggest that he is short of cannon-fodder. But there are signs of economy: he is making greater use of second-rate satellite troops, and even Italians have been rashly trusted with positions of some consequence on the bend of the Don. There are similar signs on the labour front that the claims of industry are outrunning his man-power. The number of foreign workers employed in Germany has probably risen to four millions. The food rations, though far below our own, may still furnish a bare subsistence, but they cannot suffice under the conditions of strain and excessive hours that now prevail. The health of this over-driven population suffers also from the lack of doctors: their numbers, reduced by the persecution of Jews and the discouragement of women, cannot meet the needs both of the army and the workers. That morale has suffered is evident from the lawless severities of the Courts and from the growing power of the S.S., which we discuss this week in our leading article. We should build no hopes as yet on these conditions of strain, but they may become important when the fourth winter of war sets in. Whatever may happen at Stalingrad and Baku, it is certain that big forces will still have to be left to guard the East Wall in the rigours of that pitiless climate. As it counts its dead and weighs its dwindling rations, the German working class will survey its future with few illusions and in a mood darkened by habitual fatigue. Much will depend on the sagacity with which we handle our political opportunities.

At some unpredictable moment in this fourth year of war, the invasion of the Continent must be undertaken in earnest. If it is postponed until the Russians are incapable of any counter-offensive and the main body of the enemy's veteran shock-troops can be concentrated without risk in the West, it will be an undertaking whose difficulty will be sufficiently obvious. The chance of success depends, as we have always argued, on our ability to mobilise the subjugated peoples of Europe, while we sap the will of the German masses to resist. M. André Philip, broadcasting for the Fighting French, said that liberty would be worthless for them if we were to "hand it to them on a plate." It will be of value only if they can win it for themselves. That was bravely said, and it is profoundly true. If France is ever to enjoy a future worthy of her past, the men who shape it must prove their capacity for leadership in the struggles of to-morrow. The function of the Anglo-American army of invasion is to supply the shock-troops, the armoured spear-head, behind which and round which all that is virile in the enslaved peoples must be encouraged to rally. All these men have had some military training: our part is to supply them with arms and work out in advance the plans that will use to the best advantage their daring and their knowledge of the country.

We have all been cheered by the recent successes of the Americans in the Solomons, at Milne Bay, and in three astonishing naval battles, won without firing a ship's gun. Our allies have shown that they possess the temperament for the offensive, and their naval commanders have been prompt to adopt the new technique dictated by the ascendancy of the air-arm. But we know little of their losses, and as yet it is impossible to guess whether any major offensive operations can be undertaken by forces operating on exterior lines at so vast a distance from their sources of supply. Our own belief has always been that eventually the victorious offensive must be conducted on interior lines from China. That will be feasible only when it is again possible to supply the Chinese with modern arms and reinforce them with mechanised units and an air-arm. That in turn implies the opening of some new road or the recovery of the Burma Road. Here, as in Europe, politics may be decisive. The territories conquered by Japan are passing through a severe economic crisis, because their partners in co-prosperity can absorb only a part of the crops and raw materials which they formerly exported elsewhere. Burma lived by selling rice to India, and the Philippines by sending sugar to the United States. The Japanese

are now suggesting to the Filipinos that they should grow cotton instead of sugar. From such hints as this it is possible to form some idea of the immense disturbance and the widespread misery which these dazzling victories must have caused. There is our opportunity if we know how to use it. At present we are flinging it away by our failure to reconcile India. The first step to victory in the Far East must be taken at Delhi. The next is to assure the peoples of Burma, Malaya and the Dutch Islands that the defeat of Japan would mean, not a return to the old imperial past, but a new era of equality.

France and the French

Pierre Laval is as sly and prudent as it is possible for an ambitious man to be. ' It seems at first sight surprising that he should have committed himself so flatly to the German side; stating that the hope of Europe is in a German victory, canvassing for the relève of French workmen going to Germany, acquiescing in the German demand for munitions, and the rest. But, in fact, that policy tallies with his suppression of the small independent newspapers of the Unoccupied Zone and his final dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies last week. His motive is no longer to represent himself as the pure opportunist, who can save the Unoccupied Zone from German conquest—the line he took in ousting Darlan. He is now engaged in a neck-and-neck race with his rivals at Paris for German favour. How the Germans must despise their quislings! They seem to amuse themselves by seeing how low they can make them stoop. There is nothing that Déat and Laval will not do, from cheating over the labour levy, where many men volunteered to go to Germany under the impression that they would be exchanged for prisoners, the condition that only skilled metal-workers would be counted for exchange having been carefully concealed, to the cold pogroms of the Jews. The Fighting French report that four thousand small Jewish children have been dragged away from their families to camps where they were stripped of all clothes and possessions which could make their future identification possible, and packed into trains for Germany. All this in face of the increasing resentment of the French people. They are solidifying against the Vichy regime, as André Philip, the Socialist Deputy and Professor at Lyons, said in his broadcast on Sunday. His main point was the fundamental belief which unites in resistance Catholics, anti-clericals, royalists, socialists and communists. It is the belief in the value of the human personality, which is indeed more than a creed of the French; it is an inalienable characteristic. André Philip, whose work is the organisation of French working-class resistance, expressed the position thus. General de Gaulle, he said, owed his symbolic position to the fact that he alone of the government in power when France fell refused to accept defeat. Apart from that the French resistance is a matter of individual conscience, not of position. "General de Gaulle happens to be a general, as I happen to be a professor." What is common is what André Philip defines as the principles of 1789, what Frenchmen recognise as the rights of man, what we British, more generally, designate as liberty. Both the daily paper *France* and the monthly *France Libre* emphasise the attachment of their country to this position; and although some of General de Gaulle's staff may reject it as individuals, the General has categorically stated that for him the Republic remains the valid French constitution.

Riches and Poverty in Wartime

The most startling statement in Sir Kingsley Wood's speech at Dundee last week-end was that if we were to take away by taxation all excess of incomes over £2,000 a year, the gain to the Exchequer would be only about £30 millions. He went on to give figures of the fall in the number of persons in receipt of net incomes of over £1,000 and various higher figures; and against these he set the increase in the number of persons in the lower income-groups subject to income tax, and stated that 85 per cent. of total net purchasing power is now in the hands of persons with incomes of less than £500 a year. These figures presumably refer to *personal* net incomes, after deduction of direct taxation, and do not cover impersonal incomes, which, according to the official statement published a few weeks ago, accounted for £340 millions (mainly company reserves) as against a total of £3,000 millions of individual incomes assured to income tax. Of course, the figures cannot be taken as a guide to the actual spending of the wealthier classes, many of whom must now be drawing to a substantial extent on their capital in order to maintain their customary standards. This, however, only reinforces the Chancellor's point that, to the extent to which the war is to be financed out of personal savings, the main dependence has to be on the smaller incomes. This, of course, fits in with the enormous efforts to induce savings through savings groups of every sort and kind, and is held to justify the prodigious window-dressing which occurs in connection with war savings weeks and the like. These appeals to the small savers are indeed indispensable as long as the Government is unwilling to adopt any policy of rationing total expenditure. Fuller employment necessarily means a big increase in the incomes accruing to the general body of consumers; and in face of a decreasing total of consumers' goods available for purchase, the only way of absorbing this money is either by allowing prices to rise over a pretty wide field or skimming off a large part of the income by appeals to save and invest. On the larger assumption that the refusal to ration total spending is right, the Treasury is managing this part of the business with a good deal of skill. Recent and prospective wage-increases will inevitably add to the difficulty, and the further concentration of industry which is now proceeding implies an increasing shortage of unrationed consumers' goods and a greater pressure of purchasing power on whatever remains available.

Financial Outlook

The burden of Sir Kingsley Wood's speech was that all is set fair on the financial front, and, by implication, that there is no need to worry about the finance of the war. This is true in a sense; for no one supposes that the war effort is likely to be seriously checked in any direct way by the financial factor. But in another sense the outlook is much less good. Wages policy there still is none, except that of granting advances where they are pressed for most energetically, and then persuading those affected to take as little as possible. But this policy is bound to lead to *some* increase in the total purchasing power, and to an increase that is, on the whole, badly distributed. The arrival of large American forces in this country, with plenty of money to spend, will unavoidably mean a growth of discontent both in the armed forces and among those workers and other relatively poor persons (such as small traders) who are not getting their share of what is going; and at the same time the demand for family allowances and an improvement in other social services, not after the war but now, is getting stronger. The Government has been stalling by telling those who ask for concessions to wait for the Beveridge Report; but what does it mean to do when the Beveridge Report arrives?

Plan or No Plan?

Mr. George Hicks, who is Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Planning, said the other day that immediate State control of building on all undeveloped land on payment of reasonable compensation is an important part of reconstruction policy, and that he hoped the long-expected Uthwatt Committee would have something to say on this point. We sincerely hope it will—something much more definite, and not limited to undeveloped land. Surely the first problem to be considered is that of land which has been developed, and which may need developing if we are to get a reasonably planned country after the war. The most urgent of all needs is complete control over rebuilding in *blitzed* urban areas, and indeed in towns generally; and there seems no way of getting the necessary control except by public ownership. Control over undeveloped land is needed also, and should be in the same hands as the control of developed land, in order that the cost of *not* rebuilding on congested sites may be recouped, at any rate in part, by appropriating the increment in land values in the areas in which building development does take place. There has been a good deal of talk recently about solving the problem of land control after the war by public acquisition of development rights, in order to avoid raising the controversial issue of land nationalisation. Does Mr. Hicks's speech mean that even this is now to be whittled down to some sort of control over building on undeveloped land, and that there is to be no public acquisition even of such devastated areas as the City of London and the centres of Coventry, Southampton, Plymouth, and other big towns? If individual site-ownerships are allowed to stand, there will be no possibility of any post-war planning worthy of the name; for every Council will be faced with letting owners build on their sites, or paying through the nose in compensation to prevent it. We still hope that the Uthwatt Report will propose a different policy.

Miner's Bonus

The new bonus to coal miners for output beyond a fixed standard will not be grudged if it produces any substantial amount of additional coal. But we are not able to feel very hopeful about it. As the report of Sir John Forster's Committee makes plain, the root trouble of the coal industry is the lack of young miners; and this cannot be quickly cured, even if the Committee's plan of allowing youths to opt for coal mining instead of military service is put into operation at once. The difficulty is not merely that old men cannot stand so hot a pace as young ones: it is also that technical methods have been changing very rapidly in the mines, and that many of the older men cannot adapt themselves to the new methods, however hard they may try. Something may be hoped from the new form of control, whereby colliery managers are to take their production orders from the Government, though they remain employees of their private firms; but the new system is not in working order yet, and no one really knows how it will work. It is not denied that a bonus on output will have an effect on some men, and in some pits; but we doubt if either the officials at the Fuel Ministry or the Mineworkers' Federation expect the results to be very great. As for the appeals to the public to economise on fuel, the common reaction among the middle classes appears to be that the targets set them are sheer impossibilities—and so, we believe, they are, on a voluntary basis. In this connection it should not be forgotten that the private domestic consumers, upon whom the entire propaganda campaign appears to be directed, in fact consume certainly not more than one-quarter of the coal used in this country. We should like to feel sure that in some other way equal pressure is being put on all the other consumers—from industries to shops, offices, and all sorts of non-industrial establishments. Unless the cuts in consumption are to be spread over all the consumers, including even the essential industries—which are not above using more coal than they need—there is no real prospect of securing the economies that must be made.

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SLAVE NEW WORLD

About two generations ago, when Capitalism was in its heyday, imaginative men began to see that the advance of machinery, which seemed to most people to guarantee progress, could more easily become the efficient instrument of slavery. A few turned their backs on "progress" and urged the claims of the "simple life." Samuel Butler, eccentric always, found a remedy in the destruction of machines. H. G. Wells wrote a horrific fantasy of a Sleeper who awoke in a new world of concentrated power in which the mass of mankind, wearing the livery of servitude, toiled below ground for the advantage of a tiny possessing class. Recently Aldous Huxley carried prophecy a stage farther; in his *Brave New World* the revolution depicted in the Wellsian fantasy could not take place because the master class had learnt psychologically to condition each grade of workers to the state of life in which it had pleased their rulers to call them. Capek solved the problem by turning men into Robots. More prophetic still was Jack London's picture of the defeat of Socialism by the Fascist oligarchy. In the *Iron Heel*, published 35 years ago, he prophesied that

> out of the ethical incoherency and inconsistency of Capitalism, the Oligarchs emerged with a new ethic, coherent and definite, sharp and severe as steel, the most absurd and unscientific and at the same time the most potent possessed by any tyrant class.

He foresaw that men with this new ethic might build a vast mechanical facade of civilisation based on the slave labour of the masses, who would live on starvation rations and continue "to fester and rot and ever renew itself, the common people, the great bulk of the population."

Such pictures have ceased to sound fantasies. This slave world is not impossible. Jack London knew what tyranny American Big Business might impose unless checked by insurgent democracy, and he correctly foresaw that Japan would be the centre of a peculiarly brutal form of Fascism. But his imagination lagged behind the reality of Nazi rule to-day. Three years of indescribable brutality have not sufficed to "exterminate" the Poles as a people. Nothing less seems to be conceived of by the Nazis as the proper end of the historic conflict between Slavs and Teutons. National patriotism, it is said, cannot ever be destroyed; Hitler replies that this illusion comes from lack of thoroughness in the attempt. The Jews are to die in their millions: very many have done so. Amongst the Slavs none is to survive who could possibly offer leadership in the future; no Slav under German rule is to be permitted either leisure or education. How did Dr. Ley once put it? The slaves of the Germans "ought not to be deprived of the privilege of illiteracy." The same systematic destruction is organised against the Czechs, while Russians, like Poles, are permitted to survive only if they can be used for slave labour, herded in trucks and slowly driven from one side of Europe to another, a proletariat reduced to the status of cattle. How strictly this slave status is preserved we learn from Nazi newspapers which pronounce prison sentences on kindly Germans who have innocently offered bread to Poles whose official rations are barely sufficient to sustain life within their bodies.

So much we have known ever since the German invasion of Poland three years ago. But the Nazi conception of the slave world has grown since then. The process has been continuous. We are not confronted, as some suggest, with a new revolution in Germany. The appointment of the President of the People's Courts to take charge of German justice and change the law at will is not novel; it is merely the abolition of a dualism whereby, side by side with the lawlessness of the Gestapo, the old German courts have hitherto functioned over the field of non-political justice. To-day Germany is short of manpower. The Nazi machine, baulked of rapid victory in the West against Britain in 1940 and now in the East against the U.S.S.R., must rely on foreign workers. There are now some four million workers from occupied countries imported into Germany. They form a potential threat to the Third Reich. There are other inner fronts to be guarded. Thousands of Germans still rot in concentration camps and thousands of German factory workers cannot be trusted to do the will of the Nazis without constant supervision. There is work for the Gestapo on all these inner fronts: outside Germany proper resistance continues and must be crushed in every occupied country. Nowhere are the Quislings alone sufficient: everywhere, whether the leadership is predominantly democratic or national or Communist, it is clear that as against the Gestapo at least, there is growing the unity of a common suffering and a common hatred. We note in the German press unmistakable signs of alarm at this solidarity; the most significant propaganda is not the advice of the *Leipziger Neuste Nachrichter* "to confront these people of foreign blood in an upright manner, full of superiority," but the reports in numerous papers from Danzig to the Swiss frontier warning Germans of the penalties for helping foreigners, especially prisoners, to escape from the Third Reich. There is evidence that the common people of Germany tend, in spite of all Dr. Goebbels can do, to take the side of any man, woman or child, German, Czech, Pole, French or Jew, who has incurred the hostility of the German police. Give Hitler a few more years and he will have created what generations of oratory has failed to create—a united international proletariat. To Himmler the proletariat now seems to mean all who do not willingly accept the rule of the *Herrenvolk*.

To deal with this increasingly international resistance the Nazis are now creating an international S.S. army. Much has now been written about the document which was apparently first circulated to quell the doubts of Reichswehr officers who have never been reconciled to the favours shown to the Führer's personal army. Time will show how far the true *Herrenvolk* are forced to accept as recruits to the supreme organisation of German security subsidiary regiments from occupied countries; already the armed S.S. include Dutch, Scandinavian and other foreign contingents. Nazism becomes increasingly the head of international Fascism. The possibility that somehow National Socialism might develop genuinely Socialist features ended in the blood bath of June 30, 1934. To-day Berlin is indisputably the centre of a reorganised European monopoly capitalism. We notice the reappearance at the top of great capitalists. Herrman Röchling for instance, who first demanded the German annexation of the iron mines of Longwy and Briey in the last war and whose interests were French as well as German, is now back in the centre of the stage, and, like other great capitalists, holds high rank in the S.S. He is also a member of Göring's Armament Board and head of the new Iron and Steel Corporation. It will be recalled that Röchling, who was sufficiently international in the last war to be able to arrange that two centres of heavy industry, one in German and the other in French territory, should not be bombed, was convicted by a French court after the war of double-crossing the authorities, but after a nominal sentence, permitted to continue his career as a French and German capitalist. He and a group of others like him are now the beneficiaries of Nazi violence.

The structure of the Slave New World emerges. The small capitalist has been largely eliminated. Competition, internal and external, is abolished. The destructive force of the Nazi machine has cleared away the State frontiers that limited trade and the national traditions that diversified demand. Labour, reduced to slavery, is no longer intractable; wages are the subsistence the Nazis provide. Capitalism has its paradise. Beneath the crust there is still a free Europe: it includes all who cherish national traditions, and who maintain the aspiration for a free world in which the idea of justice is not derided. Dr. Goebbels said that the Nazis would wipe out the social inheritance of liberty, equality and human brotherhood. Many who did not take him quite seriously now find that by clinging to any part of their old-fashioned creed they have become part of the underworld, the new European proletariat. To control their underworld, Himmler creates his International Police Force. Once again because Democracy failed to meet the needs of an epoch Fascism supplies its ghastly parody. At the top, this S.S. merges both in personnel and in function with the great capitalists who now see no obstacle (except some recalcitrant flesh and blood) to the control and exploitation of the whole area from the Atlantic to the Urals.

As we survey this horror, we ask how people here still contrive to think in purely national terms. The structural unity of Europe, indeed of the world, is a necessary condition of Society today. Under Hitler it would be a slave unity. It is the task of the United Nations to create a free unity.

TRY AGAIN IN INDIA

India is the most urgent problem that will face the House of Commons when it meets. It cannot permit this dangerous and disgraceful situation to continue without making a further effort to find a solution. First, it needs information. The Government should issue a White Paper stating the real extent of the damage and trouble in India, what ordinances are in force, how far such ordinances as the Whipping Order have been applied and how many have been "detained," with and without trial. The House must also be informed what response the British Government has made to the efforts of responsible persons in India, who continue to protest their belief that a National Government to defend India can still be created.

The complete scepticism with which we have regarded the news from India is justified by a telegram from Mr. Stuart Emeny in Tuesday's *News Chronicle*. He dwells on the immense damage, running into millions, done to Government buildings, and makes it clear that the effect on the war machine has been serious. Groups more violent than Congress have had a hand in organising the fiercer of these outbreaks, but the impression we derive from the scanty news, sifted and censored though it is, is that a great part of the Indian population is rapidly becoming as angry with Britain as the Japanese would wish it to be. None the less, we see no evidence that it is pro-Japanese: it is struggling for independence. Should the Japs attack, as they soon may, since the rains are over, the chances that a preoccupied army amid a hostile population could resist them with success are not impressive. The British Government seems to have no idea of dealing with this situation, save to use it to crush Congress. In the physical sense it may succeed, at the cost of creating a universal hostility.

At any cost to our imperial pride this deadlock must be broken. The actual terms of the ultimatum of Congress were unacceptable as they stood. But Mr. Gandhi had lowered his terms, had agreed to military resistance, wished to talk things over with the Viceroy and was, in short, open to persuasion. A formula could have been devised which would have allowed a National Government to take office with the same degree of freedom from interference that Congress ministries found satisfactory in their provinces. Given a mixed Hindu-Muslim Government, it would suffice to say that there should be no interference so long as this coalition held together; both would accept a British Commander-in-Chief and agree to shelve minority issues till after the war. Obstructive as Mr. Jinnah is, dare he incur the anger of Indians by rejecting such an offer? The first step should be to request Mr. Roosevelt to name a mediator. In any case a new man must soon succeed Lord Linlithgow. The offer of independence after the war, to be realised at India's choice either within or outside the British Commonwealth, should be made in the name of the United Nations.

WHITHER TRADE UNIONISM?

At the Trades Union Congress, which meets at Blackpool on Monday, Sir Walter Citrine will have to report his failure to secure the establishment of a working alliance between the Trade Union movements of Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The British and the Russian movements both want such an alliance; but the third party that has been consulted—the American Federation of Labour—will have none of it. Consequently there are two alliances, one between the British and the Russians and the other between the British and the Americans—with a suggestion, since rejected by the Russians, that the British should act as intermediaries between them and the recalcitrant A.F. of L. This failure to achieve a common Trade Union front augurs ill for Labour's place in the post-war settlement; and it seems pertinent to inquire why the British Trade Unions are allowing the A.F. of L. to stand thus in the way. For the A.F. of L. cannot speak for American Labour in anything like the same sense as the T.U.C. and the Soviet Council of Trade Unions can speak for the Labour movements of their countries. It is doubtful whether the A.F. of L. has as large a membership as its rival, the Congress of Industrial Organisations; and it is certainly a good deal smaller than the C.I.O. *plus* the Railroad Brotherhoods and the other Unions which are not affiliated to either body.

It has, of course, to be borne in mind that the A.F. of L., along with the British T.U.C., belongs to the International Federation of Trade Unions, having joined in a great hurry under conditions which suggested that its adhesion was due less to love of the I.F.T.U. than to fear of the C.I.O. getting in first. The A.F. of L. can doubtless claim on this ground that the T.U.C. ought to consult it before entering into relations with the C.I.O. But the fact remains that the C.I.O. would almost certainly have been willing to join hands with the Soviet Trade Unions, whereas the A.F. of L. was not. The line taken by Sir Walter Citrine on his visit to America practically gave the A.F. of L. a veto upon the formation of a common front, even if the A.F. of L.'s view was not that of a majority of American Labour.

There is something symbolic in the curious double position occupied by the British Trade Unions at the present time. They are, on the one hand, honestly keen on establishing close relations with the Russian Unions; but they also feel, on the other hand, much more affinity with the reactionary craft-ridden A.F. of L. than with the newer and more vigorous C.I.O. They feel this, partly because craft unionism is very powerful in the T.U.C. as well as in the A.F. of L., and the two organisations suffer under a common fear that industrial unionism may subvert their existing leadership and structure. But do they not feel it also because, like the A.F. of L., though not so explicitly, the leaders of the T.U.C. assume the continuance of capitalism, and are more at home with a type of union that relies on bargaining with the capitalist employer than with one so constructed as to offer at least a potential challenge to the capitalist control of industry?

But why, it may be asked, why, if this be so, are the British Unions eager to ally themselves with those of the Soviet Union? The answer is that this zeal is new and arises out of a war mentality which has not yet penetrated the craft unions of the United States. Moreover, the British T.U.C., having no rival to contend with, is under no fear that close relations with the Russian Unions will undermine its influence. In fact, rather the opposite; for the closer the links between the T.U.C. and the Soviet movement, the less will British Communism be likely to act upon British Trade Unionism as a disruptive force, or even as a challenge. It is an excellent insurance for the T.U.C. to be on good terms with the Soviet movement; such an alliance will leave the existing leaders much more free than they could be otherwise to go their own way.

What is the way they want to go? It can be inferred only from what is said in the General Council's reports and from what appears on the agenda for next week's Congress. The basis of T.U.C. policy is nowhere set forth; but it is plain on almost every page that both the General Council and most of the affiliated Unions are working on the assumption that the capitalist system will be still in full existence when the war ends, and will continue to exist in the post-war period. Why else does the otherwise forthright and progressive Report on Post-war Educational policy propose joint action by employers' and workers' bodies in such fields as technical education? Why, in the report on the Social Services, does the General Council propose to retain contributions from workers and employers? Why is there hardly a hint from the beginning to the end of the Congress agenda that anything more is in prospect than an extension of social services, the nationalisation of a few key industries, such as transport, and a further development of various kinds of joint councils representing employers and workers?

Some critics of the present Trade Union leadership go so far as to suggest that there are even "Fascist" tendencies in British Trade Union policy. They appear to mean by this loose phrasing that there is a tendency on the part of the Trade Unions to prefer employers to be organised in large-scale combines, because it is in general easier to negotiate collective agreements with such combines than with a larger number of small and more loosely organised employers. It is undeniable that this tendency does exist, and that it has serious dangers. To the extent to which monopolistic groups of capitalists can exploit the public by pursuing restrictive policies, they can offer their employees better terms than could be afforded under more competitive conditions. The primary purpose of a trade union being to secure for its members the best terms it can, it is hardly surprising that Union leaders should make the most of their opportunities: nor is it surprising that large combines should be prepared to use a fraction of their monopoly profits in purchasing industrial peace. But, natural as these reactions are, they lead to unfortunate social consequences. Monopoly profit is a result of restricted supply, and can be exacted only if there are non-monopolists who can be made to pay it. Consequently, the entanglement of Trade Unionism with monopoly capitalism implies unemployment, and implies also a less privileged section of the working classes at whose expense the better conditions are secured. Trade Unions whose members benefit by such conditions may be quite unconscious of what they are doing, and may yet be affected by it in subtle ways. Their practical hostility to monopoly capitalism may be undermined and they may be induced to turn a blind eye to the position of those members of the public who are not trade unionists.

How far Trade Union leaders in Great Britain are from consciously joining in any sinister conspiracy against democracy is apparent if we consider the excellent and thoroughly democratic report on education which has just been put forward by the General Council. Nor are they concerned only with the welfare of the members of their own movement, as to a great extent the A.F. of L. actually is. The contrary is proved by their demand for an all-embracing programme of social security, by their tardy conversion to family allowances, and by the general tenour of their policy outside the field of collective bargaining. It is inside this field that the danger exists—the danger that the Union, while putting forward an admirable programme of social reforms, will commit themselves to the continuance of a restrictive and monopolistic industrial system which will so impoverish Great Britain as to make these reforms impracticable. In effect, the Trade Unions are in peril of ignoring, as this year's Congress agenda ignores, the key problem of political and economic power.

Cannot the Trade Union leaders see that all the paraphernalia of joint committees of every sort and kind with the leaders of Big Business can get them nowhere, because Big Business no longer possesses the power to provide for the necessities of the whole people? Cannot they see that the present form of Trade Union organisation makes their movement quite unfit to wage the essential struggle for the overthrow of monopoly capitalism—a struggle which requires organisation on industrial and not on craft lines? Can they not see that the Trade Unions cannot be strong and militant unless they are organised, not only by industry as well as by craft, but also democratically and on a workshop or factory basis, instead of a basis of branches which have usually no point of contact with the problems of industrial control? Can they not see that the shop stewards' movement needs, not repressing in the interests of Trade Union discipline, but encouraging and building up as the new constructive force which will impel the movement forward to real power?

There is not much sign that, even now, these needs are understood. The N.U.R. indeed raises a fundamental issue by demanding an inquiry into the advisability of altering the constitution of unions where they can be shown to be ineffective for gaining general progress. But the General and Municipal Workers counter with a resolution deprecating any change in the aims of the union constitutions in an impassioned plea against doing anything at all to bring the Trade Union movement into line with the requirements of modern capitalist technique.

These are the most important resolutions before next week's Congress. Will the issue be fought out this year, or will it be shelved, as it has so often been shelved before? The N.U.R. has hit the nail on the head; but one wonders whether even the N.U.R. realises how large are the implications of its resolution. The truth is, Trade Unionism has before it the choice between becoming an appendage of monopoly capitalism—a monopoly within a monopoly—and reshaping itself to play its part in a new economic order based on democratic control. Which way will it choose? To choose neither is in effect to choose the worse.

LATIN BLOCKHEADS

[Anglo-Spanish relations are, in fact, about as good as they could be under existing circumstances . . . Sir Samuel Hoare . . . has certainly performed a difficult mission surprisingly well.—*Observer*, Aug. 30th.]

There are no neutrals in a people's war
As in old wars of thrones and dynasties,
And diplomatic feints avail no more
When multitudes against their tyrants rise.
We fight a people's victory to gain,
Then what have we to do with Fascist Spain?

"Neutrality" has varying degrees;
Some states are so by enemy direction,
(Whom we so unaccountably appease,
While cool to those of unimpugned perfection
Who merely profit from the law by which
Belligerents grow poor and neutrals rich.)

Why with base Pétain are we moderate,
Steeped in the vileness of collaboration?
Why do we favour Franco's bloody state
Who first invited Nazi occupation?
It is not for the safety of the Rock,
But to cement a post-war Latin Bloc.

For in high places still vain hopes are nourished
A Franco-Spanish combine to contrive,
And with Rome too, where liberty once flourished,
But not the lees of freedom now survive,
Since her decline and fall without a stoppage
To the degraded level of the wop age.

At what expense of honour, gold and trouble
These hidden hands are working to restore
A quaking bastion of authentic rubble!
Their Latin Bloc is rotten to the core.
The world bears witness as the war proceeds,
Latins that fester smell far worse than Swedes.

SAGITTARIUS

A LONDON DIARY

Long ago, under the whip of danger, the German Socialists and Communists in the underground opposition forgot their quarrels and learned to work together. It was only the exiles who had leisure to keep up the old feud. But at long last the prospects of friendly collaboration have grown brighter. The new fact is that the Communists have joined the German Trade Union organisation, which now includes refugees of both parties employed in this country. This gesture of solidarity has alone sufficed to change the atmosphere. There is now the possibility of friendly and courteous intercourse. The *rapprochement* ought not to stop there. I have just seen a copy of an open letter which a group of representative Communist exiles has addressed to "all German anti-Fascists in Great Britain." Among them are three former members of the Reichstag and Colonel Hans Kahle of the International Brigade. I have seldom read a document that succeeded better in conveying friendly feelings in the tones of common sense. Very wisely it outlines no detailed programme and is content to invite Germans of all parties to come together, affirming only their loyalty as allies of the United Nations and their will to victory. Austrian refugees are also trying to bridge the gap between the Social Democrats and others; last week-end they held a joint Conference which, I'm told, was a great success. There is, however, a curious snag which may prevent the creation of any council capable of speaking for the whole mass of German refugees in this country. The majority of them are Jews, and of these a high proportion has no intention of ever returning to Germany, if it is free to choose. Some think of Palestine as a future home and some of the New World, while others would, if they could, stay here: but all their ties of sentiment with Germany are broken. Such people are refugees, but they do not wish to pose as Germans.

* * *

The European service of the B.B.C. made very proper use of the lifting of the ban on the *Daily Worker* and *The Week*. Proof of how this sort of news about the vigour of British democracy may stir our friends in the occupied countries was given by the angry outbursts of Radio Paris the day after the B.B.C. news had been given. Radio Paris was evidently very much concerned to suppress the fact that in our democracy the Government pays attention to the voice of masses of people expressed, in this case, through the press, the vote at the Labour Party Conference, and the huge impending majority against the ban at the Trades Union Congress. Instead, Radio Paris declared that "as a consequence of Churchill's visit to Moscow the last right-thinking persons left in the City of London have had to give way under the pressure of that miserable individual calling himself Maisky, who is Killer Stalin's Ambassador to King George." The Paris announcer described *The Week* as "the British edition of the former French review *Europe*, wherein were exhibited the writings of Aragon and Malraux, arriviste intellectuals, susceptible to the gold and flattery of the Kremlin." Rising to a fine climax of humour, Radio Paris described the lifting of the ban on these two papers by the Churchill Government as "tangible proof of the Sovietisation of the most bourgeois country in Europe" and inquired who, after such terrible events, could pretend that "the victory of the Soviets over the Werhmacht would not lead to 'Les Soviets partout.'"

* * *

What the City Editor of the *Observer* described as "a notable contribution to the discussion of after-war problems" was made last week by Sir Francis Joseph, an ex-President of the Federation of British Industries. With surprising foresight he prophecies a "long period of emergency after the fighting ceases" and thinks chaos will be avoided by resorting to private enterprise as soon as possible. He argues that Governments do not get value for money and that they lack the experience of private enterprise. Everything has to be done in a hurry in wartime, and nobody bothers about cost. It is important to recall that people like this survive and that their whole not inconsiderable influence will be devoted to returning to a system in which, as President Roosevelt again reminds us, produces the conditions out of which Hitlers spring. If they again get their way our soldiers will be once more selling the proverbial matches in the gutter; the rebuilding of our devastated towns will only be accomplished by paying a huge toll to entirely functionless landlords; while in all matters of reconstruction the interests of the community will be subordinated to those of the few who happen to own the basic sources of wealth and who, therefore, can hold the country up to ransom. Note one thing. The problems of war demand hurry; therefore, according to Sir Francis, we must put up with State control. But will post-war problems not need haste? Do the arguments that demand social control of production in wartime somehow become obsolete because the job is to feed and clothe and house people instead of to build tanks and guns?

* * *

Ireland, North and South, has apparently talked of little lately except the case of the six men who were condemned to death for the murder of a policeman in the Six Counties. The story, I'm told, is that I.R.A. meetings and Easter celebrations were banned as usual in Belfast; that the I.R.A. was as usual determined to carry through the procession and that the method of preventing police interference is to stage a diversion. Six young men, apparently told off for this duty, shot over a police car and then took refuge in a hut; a policeman who chased them with a revolver was himself shot with five bullets. All six were condemned. The matter then became a furious political issue; if all six had been hanged I doubt if the lives of any British or American troops in Ulster would have been safe from I.R.A. sniping. The decision to hang Williams only was, I suppose, a political compromise; he seems to have been the one of the group who did not fire any of the shots that hit the policeman, but I'm told that he pleaded guilty, was probably the ringleader and certainly shot with the others. Anyway, one man executed for one murder may be regarded as just; six would have started a vendetta again that would have meant murder and counter-murders, the burning of Catholic districts of Belfast in reprisal and probably a repetition of Black-and-Tanism.

* * *

Many of my friends are obediently trying to work out their fuel targets. Those who believe they have succeeded in understanding the instructions say that the target means more than a fifty per cent. reduction. It amounts to a domestic revolution. One friend, who lives in a five-bedroomed house with three other adults and two children, tells me that, discarding coal fires altogether, he could either have hot water for baths and washing-up or electricity for heating and cooking and no hot water at all. I doubt if so drastic a change can be made on a voluntary basis.

* * *

Local war activities are diverse and often interesting. For instance, the Hertfordshire county education authority has been induced by Miss Bridget Talbot, who describes the scheme in a *Times* letter, to buy surpluses of garden vegetables for school meals. Everyone who cultivates a garden or an allotment knows how much may be produced beyond a family's needs. This waste will be saved, and the children will get cabbages which have not wilted their way through Covent Garden. If this scheme were generalised and Women's Institute stalls increased, a lot of shipping space might be saved in petrol alone. Secondly, Hampstead has set up a War Effort Committee, combining the various organisations of the borough with a view to increasing production. Thirdly, Hanley, next Sunday, is inaugurating a movement called *Lidice Shall Live*. The North Staffordshire miners began it; its aim is to raise money and plan a rebuilt Lidice for peace. The Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent is organising a meeting to which several other North Midland towns are sending representatives. There is still some meaning in the international solidarity of Labour.

* * *

The Anniversaries of the outbreak of war are marked by a diminuendo in Axis propanganda. Thus

> England, the heart of the British Empire, has become the last remaining battlefield in Europe. It is a question of time—a few weeks—then this conflagration will have reached its natural end.

So said Zeesen radio to us in September, 1940; and to the United States:

> The demolition of everything in London pertaining to England's war effort has been achieved.

A year later *Deutschlandsender* stated:

> The Bolshevik Air Force is almost completely eliminated.

But in August, 1942, the German Press Agency D.N.B. says that:

> No one in Germany hopes that the war will end this year.

German propaganda, however, finds compensations.

> Brazil's entry into the war, from a military point of view, only confers disadvantages upon the Allies.

Thus says a German broadcast: Rome, not to be outdone, broadcasts that the entry of the U.S.A. "has proved one of the greater disasters for England," just as a month earlier it declared that the Soviet-British Pact of July, 1942, "comes as a sign of good omen for us."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Michael A. Cochrane.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

> While she talked he saw in the line of her chin, in the sweep of her brows, and in the wide set of her eyes why she was the sportswear buyer for a great merchandising house.—From *Woman*.

> After telephoning Mill Hill telephone exchange, in the London area, a 16-year-old boy sang to a girl operator and told her he loved her, stated a policeman at Wealdstone Juvenile Court yesterday.
>
> He would not clear the line, and the police were called.
>
> It was alleged that the boy had wasted electricity by making an unnecessary phone call, and he was remanded for a psychological report.—*Birmingham Gazette*.

> BUSH EMPIRE.
> Ernie Lotinga
> in a brand new musical show entitled
> THE GESTAPO.
> What a laugh!
>
> —Tube poster.

> Herbert — —, electrician . . . admitted at the local police court yesterday pressing an oil-proof paper bag containing treacle against the face of a woman acting as a cloakroom attendant at a dance. He alleged that on one occasion she struck his wife on the jaw. He was fined 5s. for wasting food and £2 and costs for the assault.—Report in *News Chronicle*.

> Ebenezer Gospel Hall.—Seven Trophies of Grace will (D.V.) tell how, when and where they were saved. Meeting to-night . . .—*Belfast Telegraph*.

> Liverpool Chamber of Commerce yesterday decided to protest to the Minister of Home Security against exposing women to the "moral laxity" which exists in some cities during air raids.—*Daily Mirror*.

AGRICULTURE IN WAR AND PEACE

[This is the first of two articles by C. S. Orwin, Director of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute at Oxford.]

EXCEPT for the fighting, by sea, on land and in the air, nothing has been more in the news during the past three years than the food production campaign. Definite statistics are not available to indicate the changes in cropping and production which have been achieved under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture and his County War Agricultural Executive Committees. We are repeatedly assured, however, that they are far-reaching, and already many people are saying that this emergency organisation for controlling the use of the land in the interests of the nation at war must be kept in being to carry out the reconstruction of agriculture for a peacetime economy. Let us consider, then, how the war-time food-production campaign, the second which has had to be improvised in a generation, is effecting its immediate purpose, and how far it might be possible to adapt and reorientate it as a national policy for the future.

During the early years of the uneasy 'thirties, a great agricultural revolution had taken place. The country had gone over from a policy of free-trade in food to one of complete protection for the home producer. By 1937 there was nothing coming from the land the production of which was not being assisted by one device or another, from straight tariffs and cash subsidies to restriction of imports and even of home production. Nevertheless, the Government had not thought it worth while to use the farmers' need for help as the occasion for developing a national policy and for guiding the industry along the lines of greatest national advantage, a thing which it might have done by restricting its protection to certain commodities. On the contrary, with the world's granaries bursting with wheat and our own colonies unable to sell their cane sugar, home farmers had been subsidised to grow even more wheat and to persist in the cultivation of sugar-beet.

In 1937, too, a new principle in agricultural assistance had been adopted by the State. Contributions up to 50 per cent. of the cost of certain fertilisers were offered to farmers to encourage them to increase the productivity of their land. Two years later, with the clouds of war hanging heavily over the country, this was supplemented by the offer of a cash bonus of £2 payable on every acre of old pasture or meadow land ploughed up and brought under tillage. Approaches had already been made to the persons selected by the Ministry of Agriculture to constitute the County Committees which were to function as the Minister's agents on the spot in the event of war, and to carry out his plans for increased production.

This, then, was the position on September 3, 1939; a complete system of agricultural protection was in operation; special assistance was being given to farmers willing to intensify production; an official organisation existed in every county, ready to carry out the Minister's instructions in the event of war.

The Defence Regulations gave complete powers of control to the Minister of Agriculture, and the first use made of them by him in his scheme for increased food production was to order the ploughing-up of 2,000,000 acres of grassland. It is common knowledge that ploughland produces more food value than grassland, which gives nothing directly consumable by man and less cattle fodder than can be got from arable cultivation. The Minister undertook that the bonus of £2 already on offer to farmers for each acre voluntarily put under tillage should be paid equally for each acre broken up under orders from the Minister's County War Agricultural Committees. In each succeeding year a further inroad has been made upon the old grasslands of the country, and it has been stated officially that 6,000,000 acres will have reverted to tillage by the end of the present season.

The work has been done partly by the farmers and partly by the Ministry, on their behalf, by the issue of hundreds of farm tractors, and the implements for them, to the County Committees. It may be claimed that the joint effort has been successful. There has been some trouble with wireworm, some difficulties arising from the inexperience of farmers, particularly the smaller farmers, in the pastoral districts, but all reports agree that technically a good job of work is being done, and that the crop output of the land is being very greatly increased.

It must not be concluded, however, that this increase in crop production implies a proportionate increase in the nation's food supply, for it is probable that up to the present harvest the country had not produced a great deal more for human consumption than in pre-war days. What has been achieved is that most of the new land has been used to produce substitutes for a good deal of the twelve or fifteen million pounds' worth of cattle foods which we used to import. Apparently there has been no need in the first three years of the war to relieve the mercantile marine and the Navy of the task of importing most of our bread corn. It was not even thought necessary to prohibit the feeding of millable wheat to livestock until more than a year after the outbreak of the war. It has sufficed, for the most part, that the tonnage devoted to livestock feed should be saved, and the Minister's policy has been to take every possible step to see that farmers made themselves self-sufficient in feeding stuffs. A great press campaign was inaugurated, both by articles urging farmers to grow fodder crops and by advertisements throughout the provincial press impressing on them the need for self-sufficiency on the farm. The assistance of a great commercial firm was sought to organise demonstrations throughout the country of silage manufacture, and of a method of converting wheat straw into digestible cattle fodder.

Considerable success has attended these efforts. Poultry and pigs have declined in numbers, because some pig and poultry keepers depended wholly or in part upon the imported feeding-stuffs which are no longer available. Sheep also have fallen in numbers, because much of the grassland upon which they were fed has been ploughed up. We are assured, however, that both the beef cattle and the dairy cattle have been maintained at pre-war levels. Three years of war have passed without the necessity of making any fundamental changes in our system of husbandry. Whereas we had six million acres devoted to the production of cattle fodder in the form of grass—pasture and hay—before the war, the greater part of this acreage is still producing cattle fodder, though much more of it, in the form of crops—oats, barley, beans, mixed corn, and all kinds of roots and green crops—now that this land is under arable cultivation. The increase which there has been, also, in certain crops for direct human consumption, wheat and potatoes particularly, may be set off against the decline in the available quantity of pork and poultry products.

Three years, then, have been gained; three years of war without the necessity of drastic changes in our farming systems to adapt them to a wartime nutrition policy. Now, however, there are signs that the days of grace are over, and that the next phase in the food production campaign has begun. Statistics are not needed to prove that the wheat harvest now being gathered is larger than any previously known, yet the Minister has called for a further inroad on the dwindling grassland area so that even more wheat may be planted this autumn. It may be taken for granted that under the advice of the Committee set up, in 1940, by the Lord Privy Seal, as chairman of the Food Policy Committee of the War Cabinet, to work out a basic plan of wartime food policy for the country as recommended by the Select Committee on National Expenditure, farming will be developed from now onwards to furnish the greatest quantity of human food.

Most people, probably, are aware that our farm animals differ in relative efficiency as converters of fodder crops into human food. The most extravagant of them are sheep and beef cattle, the most efficient are dairy cows, pigs and poultry. The maintenance, let alone the increase, of pigs and poultry is impossible, for reasons given, but this does not apply to the nation's herd of dairy cows. Broadly speaking, the food fed to bullocks to produce beef would give us three times as much nutriment in the form of animal protein if fed to cows to produce milk and cheese. It follows, then, that if we had concentrated on the increase of the dairy herd and the reduction of the beef herd, the country could have enjoyed the same amount of animal food products, and much of the land now growing crops for cattle food could have been diverted to the production of crops for direct human consumption, with a corresponding release of shipping for other war purposes. In an extremity, which at present we need not contemplate, the process could be continued to the point at which our beef herd was practically eliminated and some millions of additional acres were released for crops for human food, while still maintaining the supply of animal protein through a steadily increasing dairy herd.

In broad outline this is the policy advocated by Sir John Orr since the early days of the war, and it may be taken for granted that it is the policy which the Lord Privy Seal's Advisory Committee of food experts will pursue. Its application is conditioned partly by the duration of the war, partly by the urgency of the shipping situation, and partly by the time-lag in getting greater milk production. While it would be possible to order a rapid reduction of the beef cattle in the country and the application of a proportionate amount of land to human food production as the need for tonnage might dictate, it might not be possible to increase the dairy herd in an equally short time. It takes about three years from her birth to the heifer's first lactation, and it may be suggested that a weakness of the food production policy during the past three years has been the failure, in the early days of the war, to ensure the future by insisting on the raising of all heifers and the slaughter of all steer calves. It has been no part of the Minister's policy, however, to proceed by compulsion, and, in the absence of guidance or control, farmers have followed their customary farm practice.

C. S. ORWIN

THE ALLERGIC DISEASES

THE common diseases which we now call allergic—hay fever, asthma, urticaria, eczema—have long presented doctors with a therapeutic puzzle, which they have but indifferently solved. It is only recently that this word allergy, usually misapplied, has wormed its way into popular language. Indeed, the term was actually coined well within the present century, and then only to define a physiological reaction now more generally referred to under another name. Sir Thomas Browne, in the *Religio Medici*, describes himself as "of a constitution so general that it consorts and sympathiseth with all things. I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasie, in dyet, humour, air, anything." But he evidently was well aware that such universal tolerance was not the good fortune of all men. In a notice of some books on dietetics, the *Edinburgh Review* in 1828 refers to "the special and apparently capricious varieties of digestive power which the learned call idiosyncrasy." "We see daily," the writer says, "among men of the same race and the same habits that one is poisoned by eggs, and another by honey, almonds or cheese; another finds an antidote to dyspepsy in plum-pudding or mince pie, and at the same time suffers from bread as from a poison."

Sir Humphry Rolleston has defined an idiosyncrasy as an unusual physiological personal sensibility. Allergy may be regarded as a chemical idiosyncrasy. The abnormal susceptibility, or sensitivity, with which the problems of allergy are especially concerned, is inherent. To acquired similar exaggerated reactivity, such as that produced in nearly all individuals by pre-

vious injections of foreign protein substances, the name anaphylaxis is now usually given. There are numerous medical stories that help to make the meaning of allergy clear. There is the case of the doctor who, by observing the face of a young child with infantile eczema (generally of allergic origin) could tell whether the child's nurse wore silk underclothing or not—sensitivity to contact with silk characterising most cases of infantile eczema; and that of the young man who could never approach his sweetheart on account of severe sneezing attacks; which proximity to his beloved invariably precipitated. His trouble disappeared completely when he presented the lady with a set of cosmetics free from orris root. Attacks of asthma or of hay fever are, in some individuals, caused by various pollens, fungi and small seeds; whilst, in others, peeling potatoes, or walking past a fish shop, induce similar symptoms. Urticaria and other skin troubles are, in certain people, brought about by contact with substances harmlessly handled by others. Thus, some nurserymen cannot handle chrysanthemums; and some workers, for the same reason, are unable to put dried hops into casks before the latter are filled with beer at the brewery. Various common foods, such as milk and eggs, bring on asthmatic attacks in individuals peculiarly susceptible to them; whilst strawberries, cucumbers, tomatoes or rhubarb may cause an outbreak of nettlerash in others. Sir Humphry Rolleston says that the eruption produced in a susceptible person by gooseberries has been known to reveal this constituent in a *soi-disant* champagne. Bray, who has had considerable first-hand experience of allergic diseases, quotes numerous examples of strange reactions brought about by foods and other physical agents; one patient developing herpes of the lips and ulcers of the mouth from eating nuts; and a boy coming out in a purpuric rash after eating pork. In other individuals, honey causes "nausea, vomiting, weakness, generalised numbness, and impaired vision."

The two outstanding responses of the tissues characteristic of allergy—whether the allergen is a food or an inhaled dust, or a substance with which the skin is brought into contact, or heat, or cold—are contraction of the involuntary muscles, and the dilation and consequent increased permeability of the capillary walls. The contraction of the involuntary muscles which run circularly round the tubular structures of the body—the blood-vessels, air-passages, and so on—necessarily causes a constriction of these tubes. Thus we get the spasmodic constriction of the small bronchial tubes which characterises asthma, making breathing difficult and laboured; whilst the permeability of the capillary walls is the principal cause of the local oedema which accompanies nettlerash, with its wheal-like swellings. Now, these are the two most marked effects of histamine, a substance which is liberated by any mechanical or toxic injury to the surface of the body cells. The normal body produces two antagonists, or antidotes, to histamine—adrenalin, and histaminase; and it has been found that, clinically, injections of adrenalin are most effective in dealing with all allergic symptoms, especially the respiratory ones. This suggests that the allergic patient has a congenital lack of what we may call the natural antidotes to histamine. But further research is necessary before we can dogmatise about these chemical subtleties.

An interesting and simply-written book on Allergy by Dr. Warren Vaughan, of Richmond, Virginia,* has just been published as the second volume in Hutchinson's "Advancement of Science" series. This series aims at scientific accuracy and, so far as possible, the avoidance of technical terms, so that each volume may be easily read and understood by the educated layman. Those accustomed to the severer type of text-book, which aims at didactic conciseness and scientific accuracy only, may find Dr. Vaughan's anecdotal and narrative method of exposition a little too near "entertainment" to be altogether helpful or agreeable. But I am sure that that will be no bar to the great majority of educated laymen who are interested in medical problems.

The opening of the first chapter affords a typical example of the style of presentation. "Caroline's mother had cooked a new kind of breakfast cereal. Caroline thought she would enjoy it. She placed a spoonful in her mouth. The result was as unexpected as it was terrifying. Almost at once her lips and tongue swelled to double their normal size, she had a violent fit of coughing, and it seemed to her that she was suffocating. The back of her throat swelled, and Caroline lost consciousness. Her mother, frantic with fear, called the doctor who lived next door. Dr. Smith, quickly realising the situation, muttered something about 'allergic shock with angioneurotic oedema,' while opening his bag. In a jiffy he filled his syringe with adrenalin and injected it into Caroline's arm. Several injections were needed before she was quite all right again, but by early afternoon she was playing around the house as if nothing had happened. Caroline's mother couldn't understand it; especially when Dr. Smith said that the swelling had probably saved her daughter's life. It had started so quickly that she could not swallow the cereal. If she had done so, she would probably have died from allergic shock." The tests performed by Dr. Smith the next day showed that of a number of substances injected into the skin, Caroline was allergic to flax-seed; and it was found that the new cereal contained a certain amount of flax-seed. The doctor warned Caroline's mother against giving her more of this cereal, and advised her never to apply to the child a linseed poultice, even if a doctor unfamiliar with her history prescribed it. He pointed out, also, that even proximity to fresh paint or varnish might, at any time, bring on an attack of asthma or nettlerash.

Taking but two diseases recognised as allergic, Dr. Vaughan tells us that there are probably six million sufferers from hay fever in the United States, and probably half that number of sufferers from asthma. Well might Thomas Laycock write: "Each patient has a pathological as well as a mental and social individuality." Allergy is a factor which may enter into our illnesses more than conventional aetiology yet suspects. In a book I published some years ago, I wrote: "There is no need to-day to adopt a fatalistic attitude, even towards those innate physical and psychic characteristics which we speak of as diatheses, temperaments, and the like. The discovery of the interrelations between such material infinitesimals as the vitamins and the endocrine secretions, on the one hand, and physical development, mental capacity and emotional trends, on the other, can but stir the imagination. Who shall define the limits of a possible new art of plastic or reconstructive medicine? In the words of Sir Archibald Garrod, 'It may even be justifiable to claim that what our fathers called diathesis is only another name for chemical individuality.'"

HARRY ROBERTS

* *Allergy : Strangest of All Maladies.* By Warren T. Vaughan. Hutchinson. 10s. 6d.

THE MERCENARY

THERE are very few mercenaries in this war. Many fight for a cause, and perhaps more for self-preservation, but how many are there who know nothing of these motives, whose real driving force is a love of fighting?

Among the Foreign Legionaries you may still find such men. They have fought, when the rest of the world thought of peace, in arduous colonial wars, of whose causes they knew little or nothing. From the affairs of Europe or any other continent over the last ten or even twenty years they have often been totally cut off. In the present struggle, some of them are strangely disinterested, as well as quite impervious to propaganda.

Of course, nowadays even the Foreign Legion has a great deal more political colour than it can ever have allowed itself in the past. Legionaries will tell you that they hardly ever take a German prisoner, and with the number of Republican Spaniards, Austrians, Czechs, and Germans, too, that it contains, this is perhaps not surprising. But these men, comparatively speaking, are recruits. The veterans of the Riff war, of the Djebel Druse campaign, of Indo-China, these are the real mercenaries. Such a one is my acquaintance, Khamel, a tough little Algerian mountaineer.

He has been in hospital three weeks now, with splinter wounds in his left hand. He has brown, very curly hair which comes right down the back of his neck, a yellow, wrinkled skin, and almond shaped, twinkling eyes. But the main feature in this weather-beaten countenance is his protruding lower jaw and lip, full of obstinacy, and cheerfully pugnacious. Much of the day he spends at the entrance to the tent, smoking with his good hand, and holding the other tucked across his chest, while he screws up his eyes, and stares at the Southern hills. He has a short stocky figure, always dressed in dark blue pyjamas, and one day as he stood there, left arm thrust into his jacket, as usual, a passing driver shouted out, "Look, there's a pregnant Chinaman." The description was perfect. Like so many others in these parts, he is in hospital through picking up an Italian hand grenade. It appears this is the third time he has done so. When I asked him why he was so stupid, he smiled, creasing his whole face, and replied, "What matter? I am luck." Still for one so foolhardy, he seems to know something about Italian booby-traps, and has explained to me the "thermos," the "red-devil" and the "mouse-trap." The last is a specially unpleasant invention, consisting of a small mine hidden in the sand and carefully sprung. A man's tread is enough to fling it into the air, where it explodes about the height of his navel.

Khamel was in Syria at the time of the collapse of France. He fought for the Vichy forces in June, 1941. It's true, of course, that he had almost no choice in the matter. Still, a fair number of French troops either tried to join the British, or went into concentration camps rather than resist the invasion. But Khamel would always choose a scrap in preference. So when he was captured at Merj Ayoun, he was quite ready to join the Free French, and take part in the advance on Damascus.

In behaviour he is the mildest little man, and pretends to be excessively timid. When not strolling outside the tent, he plays euchre with a sharp-eyed Syrian in the next bed. In spite of the fact of "I am luck," he is the most unsuccessful card-player I have ever seen. His concentration never lasts through a game, and already he has lost his cigarette ration for the next two months.

Khamel won't go back to his Algerian village after the war. As you might expect, he is far from being a family man. "Femmes," he said once, in his strange form of pidgin French, "Femmes, il y a bon! Mais une femme—Paf—pas pour un soldat." Then he went on to tell a long story of a disastrous visit to a military brothel in Damascus, a long story which ended abruptly—"Trois baisers, puis morte. Très gauche." "Très gauche," I agreed, "and I don't suppose you could pay for the damage." He says he is fondest of negresses. He sticks firmly to the notion of which one hears from a number of French soldiers, that any fleas discovered on a negress are black fleas, which pay no attention whatever to white people.

The treatment of his wound is apparently in his eyes a form of personal ju-ju: it makes all the difference who changes the dressing. "Si le Commandant, oui, si mademoiselle" (meaning the ward sister). "Peut-être, si vous . . ." and he shrugs his shoulders, drops his jaw, and beams delightedly, meaning that in the third contingency, the cure is a very long way off indeed.

Yet the little man is possessed of great natural dignity. Soldiering is his job, and he knows it. When he talks gravely, one is reminded of Othello's

Were it my cue to fight, I should have known
Without a prompter . . .

and for all his comic appearance, he is not the sort to fluff his cue. Although the political issues of the war clearly mean little or nothing to such a man, there are moments when they may happen to cast a slur on his honour as a soldier. And this lies, itself rather like a stray hand grenade, covered or uncovered by the sandstorms of this war's history, but deadly to the unwary. Something of this sort happened to him in the Syrian campaign. It can't possibly, however, be reproduced in his queer broken French.

He was taking part in the attack on Kiswe, a few miles outside Damascus. His platoon had been held up by a particularly obstinate machine-gun post on the upper floor of a house. Finally a shell from a mortar silenced the gun, and Khamel was the first to dash into the house. He found three men dead, and an officer badly wounded, but still holding his revolver, and trying to put on a field dressing. Khamel offered to bandage his thigh—he could see the broken ends of bone sticking out, but the officer held him off with a revolver. "What are you, are you Gaulliste?" he demanded. "What's that matter to you?" Khamel retorted, "I'm a soldier fifteen years; give me that dressing."

"If you're a sale Gaulliste . . ." the officer began, but Khamel skipped behind him, and before he could turn on his injured side, wrenched away the pistol. He flung it to the far end of the room, and started to bandage the leg. But the officer wouldn't shut up. He was a brave fellow, but as obstinate as a mule. "So you daren't tell me. Well that proves it."

"Well, what if I am?"

"Ah you filthy Algerian swine, it's like you to turn on us at a moment like this. We should have known you were rats before."

"Do you mean that?"

"I tell you're pigs and traitors the lot of you. Allez, fous le camp."

"Not twice, you don't."

Khamel had stopped bandaging the leg and straightened up. He leapt across the room and came back with the revolver. He put it straight to the officer's head and shot him, as he expressed it, like a cow.

War aims naturally don't mean very much to this type. Life to him is more a matter of shaking down in whatever circumstances he happens to find. He doesn't reckon to shape those circumstances; on the other hand, he prides himself on a tough resistance to them. One day, seeing me laboriously finishing off a dug-out, he strolled over with another Algerian. "How many days?" he asked. I told him this was the fourth. "You don't work," he smiled. "When I was at Sidi D—, I finished mine in a day." "Nonsense," I told him, "I've been at Sidi D—. The ground's so hard, they use shot drills there."

"No, it's true," the other Algerian interrupted, "He wouldn't use a drill. He wouldn't sleep either till he finished."

I believe these fellows for an odd reason, not because they are morally consistent, but from the way they talk French. One is used to hearing French talked as a flow, rhetorical, babbling, decisive, elegant, as the case may be. But by this man, and others like him, it is a naïve, nursery French, bass in pitch, slow and expressing only the simplest conceptions and those ungrammatically—il y a bon—beaucoup malade—lui parle trop. So one pictures his way of life, slow to change, primitive, vehemently expressed.

After the war . . . but there isn't any real after the war. War and peace are so alike. Only the Riff war was rather harder and more unpleasant and worse paid than this one.

IAN SCOTT-KILVERT

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THE LAST ASCENT

We cried: Good luck! and watched them go
Over the hayfields in the sun;
Then, dreaming of their happiness,
We waited till the day was done,

And we could greet them, tired and gay,
Returning to the supper laid
Where on the wild flowers round the porch
The apple branches shook their shade.

Night came: but still there was no sign.
We sent the children to their bed,
And lit the lamp, and spoke no more,
Still waiting, with bewildered dread.

An hour before the moon should rise,
We heard their feet drag through the grass;
Their clothes were torn, their cheeks had bled,
And as we ran to aid, "Alas,

The ice-bound steep," they sighed, betrayed:
That last ascent! The inhuman skies!"
"We looked at one another then
With question frozen in our eyes—

"We did not guess, no angel warned
How cruel the eagles and ravines!"—
Where had they wandered? What mirage
Had lured beyond our farmland scenes?

There was no mountain there, no snow,
No glacier where the eagle hovers,
No deep ravine of dizzy fall
To scar and shock: but they were lovers.

JOHN LEHMANN

THE MOVIES

"Larceny Inc." at Warner's.
"Fingers at the Window," at the Regal.
"The Goose Steps Out," at the Odeon.
"Men of Washington" and "Tarzan," at the Empire

Not a week for highbrows; rough houses and horse laughs meet us everywhere.

There is a pretty situation in *Larceny Inc.* Some of the boys fresh from Sing Sing have taken a leather shop next to a bank; it's Christmas Eve; snow on the street; Edward G. Robinson as a Father Christmas, smoking a cigar and keeping the look-out; customers scrambling for bags in the shop, while down below the boys are drilling their way into the bank vault . . . And, as a sort of refrain, when all other stratagems have failed, Edward G. will tell someone a sad tale about his old mother and walk away with a new overcoat, or one of the boys will step in front of a car for the sake of the damages. Yet despite these gaieties, *Larceny Inc.* ranks low among gangster pieces. It gets its laughs, gorillas have hearts of gold, there are flowers in buttonholes and a gun in the till, but somehow the whole charmed existence lacks charm A perfect small performance, by the way, from the pansy barman, whom I can't identify in the list of characters.

Fingers at the Window touches new heights of incredibility in detection. New York is startled by six axe murders, each the work of a schizophrenic; a seventh and an eighth threaten. I won't give away the plot, but we are asked to believe that a criminal can impersonate the "voices" of schizophrenics and so direct a campaign of murder, and that the "leading neuro-pathologist of the world" would be taken in by an actor shamming mad. This opens up new paths in the study of schizophrenia. No good detective tale could ever be weaved round detail so wildly absurd. But does it, despite everything, thrill? Yes, to begin with, no, after twenty minutes. Basil Rathbone is made to show once more that there can be no handsomer villain than a psychiatrist.

The goose at the Odeon is really Mr. Will Hay. Donald Duck, shooting woodpeckers with a camera, appears in the same programme, and I was struck by the resemblance between them. I prefer Mr. Hay as an individual because I can understand what he's saying, but I must admit that he has yet to appear in a film on the level of his Holborn Empire days. However, the old act has expanded agreeably. This time he is an English agent, dropped by parachute in Germany, where he takes a finishing class of young Nazi spies polishing up their English. Half the joy of Mr. Will Hay is etymological. There is some bother over pronunciation; "Slough" and "tough," "Worcester" and "Cirencester" present problems not only to the most erudite of Nazis but to Mr. Hay; and the consultations of the General Staff about pincers and panzers, flanks, ranks and tanks have a real batty flavour. One thing about *The Goose Steps Out* is that it can make us laugh at Nazis, heiling, Hermann and Schicklegruber without feeling that we should be always grim and never gay. The Paramount news in the same programme contains another instalment from their admirable filming of the Malta convoy. The camera-man in this case is David Hardy, who not only does his job brilliantly as a photographer, but provides a good commentary. I hope that this example will be followed. Fewer accents from the studios and more from the men on the spot would improve any newsreel 50 per cent.

With its new issue closely following the last, the *March of Time*, now in its eighth year, is distributed by Twentieth Century Fox. If this means wider circulation, as I presume it does, the change will be welcome; for there are still people who have never seen a *March of Time* film. *Men in Washington*—1942 gives a cross-section of the American capital in war-time: people in cafes and trains, uniforms everywhere, government departments spreading huts over lawns, shortage of living room, the White House, Mr. Roosevelt, the New Deal, the Isolationists, personalities of the Administration. The only thing left out is the abominable climate. Also, at the Empire, Tarzan and his four-footed friends arrive in New York to fight the gangsters. Wouldn't they do better to start a Second Front somewhere? WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

ALTERNATIVE FOR CHRISTIANITY

SIR,—Professor Joad has once more shown that he appreciates the significance of the Malvern Conference, but the alternatives that he suggests lie before the Church are not alternatives at all, and, despite his sympathy, the value of which I certainly would not underestimate, Professor Joad fails to understand both the character of the Church and the spiritual forces that are inspiring the Malvern movement. When, too, he writes that Conrad Noel "sought to make religion a thing beautiful but apart," he suggests the exact contrary of what Conrad deduces, which was to make religion a thing beautiful and of vital everyday concern to everyday people.

Professor Joad says that churchgoing, scanty enough before the war, has dwindled since the war. This statement is apparently made on the authority of a number of un-named clergymen. Judging from my own observation, and I am a regular churchgoer, I doubt whether this is true.

Before the war it was estimated that 17 per cent. of the population were communicant members of either the Church of England, the Roman Church or the Free Churches. The bulk of the Anglican and Nonconformist congregations belong to the lower middle class. Five and twenty years ago, Anglo-Catholic churches in slum districts were crowded. Now most of them are nearly empty. In the country, the male workers rarely go to church, and few working women are regular in their attendances. And churchgoing is no longer part of the weekly routine of the well-to-do, either in town or country. But there is nothing new in all this, and it has to be recognised that the people who do go to church are influenced by the active need to join in corporate worship and by the consciousness of the supernatural. It is faith, not fashion, that makes them prefer the church to the golf course on a Sunday morning.

As the Bishop of Bradford has deplored, a considerable proportion of the 17 per cent. are selfishly content with life as it is. They vote Tory at every election—the suburbs, with their immense Tory majorities, are far above the average in churchgoing, and are dully and numbly opposed to all that Malvern demanded. On the other hand, the move to the Left of the black-

coated proletariat is the one real and hopeful political development since the war and this movement (I feel sure that Richard Acland will agree with me) is most evident among men and women who are practising Christians and have been directly affected by Malvern and Dr. Temple.

The two pamphlets containing the Malvern Findings have had a joint circulation of over a million. The Archbishop's Penguin Special *Christianity and the Social Order* has had an immense sale. And a month ago, every seat was sold for the Albert Hall meeting at the end of September, at which the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and Sir Stafford Cripps are to water the seed sown at Malvern. All this is evidence that there is a growing minority of practising Christians in this country eager (to quote Professor Joad), "to align themselves with the revolutionary tendencies stirring in the matrix of the times."

The point that I want to emphasise is that these Socialists and near-Socialists are Socialists and near-Socialists because of their religion, because far, as Professor Joad supposes, from being bored by ritual and ceremony they value and understand their mystical value and significance and, since they are religious, they cherish doctrine and dogma, for religion without dogma is a banal burlesque.

I do not profess to be able to estimate the social value of the prayers of the enclosed religious, though I understand something of the urge that leads better men than I am to a life of detachment and austerity. For the anti-Christian mysticism of Aldous Huxley I have no sort of interest. To me it is a bad form of that bad thing, other-worldliness.

But it is of supreme importance that it should be realised that the move to the Left within the Church that Professor Joad welcomes is a conscious struggle towards the Cross and all that it represents.

It may be, though I doubt it, that if the Church of England took Professor Joad's advice and abandoned the lovely and inspiring ritual of the Holy Eucharist and ceased to teach the creeds, the number of its active adherents would increase. But that is "a church come-back" that the Archbishop most certainly will not stage.

He is inspiring his "little flock" to service and sacrifice to make life, here and now, kind and comely and just. He has declared in his Gifford Lectures that Christianity is the most materialistic of all the great world religions, by which he meant that it is concerned with man's well-being in his life on earth. Perhaps if and when it is clear that the Church obviously recognises to the full the social implications of "the faith once delivered to the saints" the little flock will become a great flock. But if the Church ceases to be "the mystical body of Christ," it will cease to have any chance of successfully fighting the devil and all his works.

It is a horrible heresy to regard the Church as a house of rest for the languid and the weary. It can only live as a fighting force and Professor Joad will rejoice with us that there is to-day an ever increasing understanding that the foes that it is called on to fight are these forces of ignorance, inequality, cruelty and injustice that have marred God's fair world with want and waste and war.

SIDNEY DARK

SIR,—Professor Joad's prospect for religion is a gloomy one: the alternative of a creedless Christianity (a kind of Socialist State Church), or Anglo-Catholicism which in seeking to resurrect dead ways of thinking is in no better circumstances than the Emperor Julian.

If "the instinctive creed of the Left . . . founded upon the discovery of man's ascent through evolution" is dashed by a couple of wars and a slump—twenty-five years against fifty million—then its professors are men of little faith. Surely evolution is not a doctrine of perfectibility? Its best achievement, the human brain, could no more be evolved along tramlines of truth and goodness than the body containing it could be proof against pain and death in a world of earthquakes, bacteria, and ceaseless flux. If Christ and Beethoven were to be possible, de Sade and Hitler also had to be possible; the technique that can harness the ploughshare to a tractor must be equally capable of turning the sword into a tank.

But science has done more for us than explain suffering and wickedness. It has also given us hope. "It has shown us . . . a fundamental unity of all phenomena, however apparently diverse," says Dr. Huxley, and this fundamental unity must apply to the mind as part of all phenomena. In that case, having reached a sufficiently high level of development, the mind must attempt to form concepts of that unity and to initiate action on the strength of them. The Greeks guessed that if they could find a fundamental principle in the universe, it would be a clue also to human conduct. Science has proved the thing postulated by philosophers in words, by architects, painters, and composers in constructed unities of form, colour and sound, by religious leaders in moral precept, by world conquerors in aggression.

Mankind as a whole has always striven to organise a universal state. There have been many great nations with great histories, but the more highly they were developed the more unhappy they were, for they felt more acutely than other people the craving for world-wide union. The great conquerors, Timours and Ghenghis-Khans, whirled like hurricanes over the face of the earth striving to subdue its people, and they too were but the unconscious expression of the same universal unity. (*Dostoevsky: The Brothers Karamozov.*)

The human race is in a position for the first time to attempt the conscious expression of that craving, not in the form of an ant-heap but as the willing integration of the individual and nation as a whole. Reality has supplanted its symbols. What matters in religion is not the decrease of church attendance but the increase in the number of people whose view of the brotherhood of man is not obscured by any sectarian, and therefore separatist, dogma.

JOHN ARMSTRONG

Tilty Mill House,
Great Easton,
Essex.

THE S.S. DOCUMENT

SIR,—Why does "Critic" put great importance on the contents of "secret documents" captured with "high officials" in Libya? Is it not peculiar that in wartime, each of the combatants are always finding "secret documents" which always justify their propaganda against their enemy? Does not "Critic" remember how the Government's propaganda against Russia in 1917 and 1918 was all proved to be quite true by the seizure of "secret documents" describing the "nationalisation" of women? And what of the important find of the copies of *Pravda* in which all the atrocity stories were vindicated?

I hope that "Critic" can inform his readers that, like *Pravda* of twenty-three years ago, the "secret documents" were printed by a printer who is T.U. in all departments.

A. BENNETT

Albion Cottage,
Hartley Row,
near Basingstoke.

[Our correspondent's suspicions are not, we believe, justified in this case. There are good reasons for accepting the authenticity of this document. British broadcasts to Germany have constantly used it in their propaganda, stating categorically that it was circulated to officers throughout the German army. No denial, we believe, has been issued by Dr. Goebbels either for foreign or home consumption. The conclusion would seem to follow that denial is impossible because the document has actually been in the hands of German officers. Further, the tenor of the document fits with subsequent statements made in the *Schwarze Korps*, to which we also referred last week, and with the present tendencies of the Nazi Order discussed in our leader in this issue.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

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COLOURED SOLDIERS

SIR,—I am glad to see Mr. Little's letter in your last issue. The League of Coloured Peoples is very much concerned about the "official" attitude adopted towards these coloured American troops. The war has provided a unique opportunity to solve this question of race throughout the world and apparently we are unable either to see or to take advantage thereof. Instead we find our own authorities endeavouring to establish a "Jim Crow" attitude in this country.

The inconsistency of ostensibly fighting against the *Herrenvolk* idea and at the same time maintaining this idea in practice within our own borders does not appear to have struck the authorities concerned. The British Government has on more than one occasion, since the outbreak of war, made its attitude clear towards her own coloured nationals. Although I admit that in the case of the Americans the question has to be handled delicately because of ingrained traditions, nevertheless I feel that our Government must somehow, and that quite soon, assert that this country will not stand for any "Jim Crow" attitude in relationship to coloured Americans. If this is not done soon, then I believe there will be a grave danger of sabotaging the war effort. Coloured peoples, whether American, Chinese or British, are in this war to fight for their own freedom as well as for the freedom of the world, and the main significance of the whole issue of the present world revolution will be lost unless this fact is fully realised.

Revolutions always enlarge the area of human freedom. Just as the revolution of 150 years ago resulted in the emancipation of the slaves, so will the present revolution result in the social, economic, intellectual and political emancipation of their descendants in America and the West Indies and their compatriots in Africa and throughout the world.

(Dr.) HAROLD A. MOODY
(Founder and President,
The League of Coloured Peoples)
164 Queen's Road,
S.E.15.

PLANNING THE LAND

SIR,—It was a great disappointment to read your querulous article on "Planning the Land for Use." Of all journals, we had hoped to find the greatest encouragement for the multitudinous things which the Scott Report recommends in yours. Instead, you sneer at it because it does not contain the politically contentious recommendation of Land Nationalisation. You appear to suggest that we must wait for the millenium before any of the good things in the Report, which we all want, can possibly be realised.

Surely it would be better to welcome the many noble and urgent reforms recommended in the Report, and to strive to keep these from being pigeon-holed, rather than carp because your own political panacea is not included. Reactionaries will be doing their best to find reasons for shelving first one, and then another, of these wise recommendations. Your article, I fear, will only succeed in giving them material for this—"Why even the progressives are against it!" I think it is up to you now to prove them wrong.

KENNETH SPENCE,
Chairman of the
Ramblers' Association
Cwmcarvan Court, Monmouth.

[We recommend our correspondent to read some of the plans drawn up by the Ministry of Reconstruction during the last war, and which were all pigeon-holed because no government would face the political problem involved. Nationalisation of land is not a "panacea"; it is a condition precedent to nearly all the reforms proposed by the Scott Committee. Without it private owners will obstruct and private interests sabotage planning exactly as before. As a farmer, Mr. Spence should ask himself how he would tackle the problem of next year's crops if a hundred private persons owned parcels of his fields and had legal rights of obstruction over all his land.—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

PEACE AIMS

SIR,—The publication within recent months of official statements and agreements bearing on the post-war situation has given official encouragement to the widespread effort now being directed to the working out of the conditions of a just and enduring peace. It is now commonly accepted that commitment to a bold and constructive peace policy may contribute vitally to an early and satisfactory ending of the war as well as to the assurance of a durable international order when the war is over.

If these official declarations are to be the instrument of a sound peace, they must be maintained by a strong and informed public opinion, and this letter is written to direct the attention of readers of the NEW STATESMAN to the responsible part which the National Peace Council is playing in forming that opinion. In twelve meetings held in London and Oxford since the war began, the standing Peace Aims Conference of the Council has given detailed consideration to the moral, economic and political bases of peace. Fourteen pamphlets in the Peace Aims series, which are largely based on the work of this Conference, are recognised as providing some of the most constructive material that is available for the discussion of these problems. Moreover, as a federation maintaining contact either through affiliation or through a looser association with all the organisations and groups actively interested in the peace aims problem, the Council is well placed to secure the necessary concentration of their influence and resources.

An appeal for a Peace Aims Campaign Fund of £5,000 to provide for the effective development of the work over the next three years has recently been issued under the signature of the officers and Vice-Presidents of the Council. We who have some practical experience of the quality and importance of the Council's work in this field and are convinced of its claim for increased support, wish to endorse the appeal and to commend it to the generosity of readers of the NEW STATESMAN. The fund is already well on its way to the first £1,000, but it is urgently necessary that its growth should be accelerated. Contributions, large or small, from your readers would be gratefully welcomed by the Hon. Treasurer, Dame Elizabeth Cadbury, at 144 Southampton Row, W.C.1, the new address of the Council.

NORMAN BENTWICH, C. E. M. JOAD,
G. P. GOOCH, HAROLD J. LASKI.

HOW TO WIN THE WAR

SIR,—With reference to "Corporal's" letter giving evidence of "red tape" in the R.A.F., *I can beat it!*

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(4) New Tally Card raised for entry of item.

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ASSIGNMENT TO BERLIN

HARRY W. FLANNERY

★ In December 1940 William Shirer left Berlin. His successor as C.B.S. representative was Mr. Flannery, who stayed there until America entered the war.

★ It was a year of significant changes in the course of the war: Hitler invaded Russia; British bombing of German soil was intensified; Mr. Flannery visited Hamburg, Leipzig, Cologne, Mannheim, Coblenz, Munich and other cities.

★ He had conversations with P. G. Wodehouse, Matsuoka, Max Schmeling, the Stuka pilot who bombed the Illustrious, the commander of the Crete parachutists and other significant people.

★ ASSIGNMENT TO BERLIN is the inside story of Germany which he could not give through the censored microphones.

MICHAEL JOSEPH

BOOKS IN GENERAL

"THANK God that the Honour and Power of Ireland are not involved in the disgraceful Afghan War." This sentence surprised Thackeray when he read it in an Irish newspaper in the summer of 1842. He was collecting material for his *Irish Sketch Book*, volume of "reportage" based on three months' travel and a determined effort to see for himself. At the distance of a hundred years the book is still of interest as one more example of the strange psychological relationship between what used to be the sister-kingdoms.

Irish neutrality to-day shocks, scandalises and infuriates us, but I strongly suspect that it also gives us a certain amount of pleasure. In the whirlpool of destruction and distress it is agreeable to reflect that quite close to us there is a small country which insists upon treating our reality as unreal, and treating as real the preposterous postulates of stability which we have been forced to discard. How many of us turn with relief from the war news to the Dublin letter of the *Sunday Times*, simply to enjoy the change of climate?

The situation is strangely reversed. Elie Halévy described the nineteenth century as the period in which the English abandoned themselves to the magnificent illusion of having discovered in tempered liberty the secret of moral and political equilibrium, not merely for themselves, but even for other peoples who had the good sense to follow their example. Halévy foresaw with terrible clearness the disasters towards which we were moving, but I do not recollect his commenting on the dire consequences of the English people's magnificent illusion on their own poetical and political imagination.

The misfortunes and the attitude of the Irish were throughout the nineteenth century the most immediate challenge to our hubristic belief that two and two must add up to a respectable commercial four. Apart from questions of individual genius this was the permanent claim of Irish imagination on English attention. Thackeray when he came to Ireland was the last man to be seduced by bohemianism. A struggling journalist of 32, whose every major venture had so far failed, he had thrown away capital, which provided an income of £500 a year, by a mixture of generosity, gambling and speculation. He was the father of two small children and his wife had gone out of her mind. This was enough to prejudice a conscientious man in favour of common sense and hard work. He hated beggars; was violently anticlerical; disliked dirt and indolence.

But once in Ireland an incalculable element breaks in which leads him to look charitably at disorder and to wonder if he has formed a correct estimate of human misery. By the time he has reached Skibbereen his dislike of the dirt is overcome by an almost admiring wonder at the inn pantry! "Every article is a makeshift and has been ingeniously perverted from its original destination. Here lie bread, blacking, fresh butter, tallow candles, dirty knives—all in the same cigar box with snuff, milk, cold bacon, brown sugar, broken teacups and bits of soap. No pen can describe that establishment as no English imagination could have conceived it." Of the appalling hovels in which the Skibbereen beggars lived, Thackeray writes: "I declare I believe a Hottenhot kraal has more comforts in it: even to write of the place makes one unhappy and the words move slow. But in the midst of all this misery there is an air of actual cheerfulness." Not even the shadow of famine could alter the fact that Irish life, by escaping "the magnificent illusion" of the English, enjoyed for all its drawbacks, the liberty of a fifth dimension. Thackeray's own imagination was to take Irish wings a few years later in his first considerable novel, *Barry Lyndon*.

One of the principal purveyors of the pleasure of this liberty to English readers in Thackeray's day was Charles Lever, to whom Thackeray indeed dedicated the Sketch Book. Lever was in 1842 far more widely read than Thackeray was to become until the publication of *Vanity Fair* six years later.

Lever is now principally remembered through Thackeray's parody of him, *Phil Fogarty*, in the brilliant series *Novels by Eminent Hands*. Thackeray who liked Lever personally and enjoyed his books, would probably be the first to regret this. The parody has the further misfortune of advertising Lever as a novelist of military adventure, and indeed it was as such that he was read and enjoyed not only by the Duke of Wellington, but, much more recently, by that very judicious critic, Thomas Seccombe, who wrote admirably of him in the 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica*. But it is noteworthy that the one personage in Lever's novels whom Trollope considered to have the depth of a "character" was the dwarf servant "Corny Delaney," who appears in Lever's third novel *Jack Hinton, the Guardsman*, and never does battle with anyone more military than Jack Hinton's mother.

It is comprehensible that Trollope did not see anything more in Lever than an admirable raconteur, for Trollope was the least poetical of our great novelists and the least interesting as a manipulator of words. Lever's charm to-day lies in a vein very near the poetical, in the humorous dramatisation which covers ragged human dignity in sudden bursts of almost rhythmical dialogue and in short stretches of magnificent rapid action. "The author's character," wrote Thackeray "is not humour but sentiment. The spirits are mostly artificial; the *fond* is sadness as appears to me to be that of most Irish writing and people."

This remark applies equally well perhaps to two later Irish writers, who worked often recognisably in Lever's vein, the authors of *The Adventures of an Irish R.M.* and of *The Real Charlotte*.

Lever's first book *Harry Lorrequer* (1837) can no longer be claimed as anything but amusing in small doses. The spirits are very definitely of the artificial kind. The fifth dimension it offers is simply the irresponsibility of young officers and fox-hunting squires. His next *Charles O'Malley* is a great deal better, but being widely quoted as the best and probably the only one worth reading to-day, it probably does his reputation more harm than good in spite of some excellent Irish scenes at the beginning and end, and the conversation of Charles' body servant Mickey Free. The long chapters of military adventure which make up most of the book and fascinated nineteenth century readers have lost much of their attraction to-day.

It is not until Lever's third novel *Jack Hinton*, that the Irish fifth dimension ceases to be a mere holiday outing for the reader. When his young hero, an English officer attached to the Lord Lieutenant, leaves Dublin by canal-boat after a hundred pages of Lorrequerism in order to settle the complicated interests of an Irish friend in a Connaught steeple-chase the reader accompanies him into an enchanted land. The talk of Father Tom Loftus on the canal boat has an intoxicating suggestion of James Joyce. The mad beggar, Tipperary Joe, who becomes the hero's bodyguard, makes the humour, the fantasy and the swift succession of adventures a natural product of the *fond* of sadness to which Thackeray referred. Once Father Tom and Joe have been invented Lever can take Jack Hinton out of the world of Lorrequer jokes into the grim atmosphere of agrarian murders, where the entertainer of the respectable Irish and English public is engaged in a constant battle with his own "dangerous thoughts."

Thackeray, faced with the same problem, had boldly argued that where, as in Ireland, most murders are, in the eyes of the masses, acts of retributive justice, the first remedial step is for the State to set the example of humanity by removing the death penalty from the official armoury of justice.

Lever was not the man to make that sort of contribution to the subject, but his strong feeling for the Irish underdog comes out even more clearly in his next book, which was to have been another "pipe-clay" novel in the series *Our Mess* like its predecessors. It bore the robust title *Tom Burke of Ours*, but in the days of novels published in monthly parts, it was not easy for an author to know where his imagination would lead him. Already in the first part the hero is flying from his wicked guardians with the wandering piper Darby the Blast as guide and by the second Darby is irremediably a rebel—a "United Irishman, and a White Boy and a Defender and a Thrasher besides. I was in all the fun in them times." So there is nothing for it but to make Tom escape from Ireland (after an incident providing a most insubstantial justification for the title) and enlist in the army of the First Consul. His adventures in the French army, as might be expected of a Lever novel, are of extremely unequal interest, but he survives to stand his trial for attempted murder in Dublin and owe his acquittal to the evidence of Darby (himself by now an escaped convict) in one of Lever's best scenes.

I have attributed the charms of Lever to the fact that he wrote as an Irishman (albeit of English descent) who could not feel that all was right with the world. But honesty compels me to admit that I would not undertake to read any of his books without the full complement of illustrations by that remarkable Englishman, Phiz. To what critical conclusions that should lead is another story.

FRANCIS GENN

THE PIED PIPER

Parents Revolt. By RICHARD AND KATHLEEN TITMUSS. *Secker and Warburg*. 3s. 6d.

When society is in a mess there are always a few people who look beyond immediate issues, the elections, battles and the rest of it, to underlying causes. They trace the development of great economic and historic forces. They used to regard those forces as unalterable and call them "economic laws," even "laws of nature." This meant that there were some factors which seemed constant and beyond human control. To-day our problems are made even more difficult by technical advances that bring the most impersonal factors within the realm of conscious control. The law of population, for instance, has simply disappeared. The popular use of deliberate birth control is producing changes which make most political discussions simply irrelevant. Here is one case in which it is the individual's power, not the State's, that is magnified by a modern discovery.

Mr. and Mrs. Titmuss do not set out to make any new contribution to the study of population problems; their object, admirably achieved, is to provide in a short, readable and commonsense book the population facts that most affect the common man of our day, and they relate these events to the social background in which they have occurred. That people to-day of all classes consciously limit their families is a matter of common observation; that this limitation can be related to international and social fluctuations and to the general lack of belief in the society in which we live, is also certain. It follows that a social change that revives the common man's belief in his future may reverse the tendency which, on a likely calculation, will reduce the population of Britain to something over four millions in less than a century from now.

No careful observer is likely to dispute that one reason for a declining birthrate is that comfort and personal power are to be obtained in our society through the making of money, and that there are obvious personal advantages in avoiding the expense and responsibilities of parenthood. But Mr. and Mrs. Titmuss now show us that, whereas we were told a few years ago that this drastic limitation of families was a sign of the personal selfishness of the well-to-do and the decadence of the upper classes, it is in fact part of the general emancipation of women, which now penetrates all social levels. We are given figures which prove that the social differentiation of class fertility has now been reduced to very small dimensions. There is a small feckless class at the bottom which is still the most fertile, but even there the dis-

tinction is no longer marked. Actually, clerical workers are the least fertile; professional men, directors and such like come second; with employers and business managers, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers following in that order. The details given in this book of the differences between various industries and categories within these broad divisions are interesting. But the fact remains that the occupational and class differential in fertility is being rapidly reduced, and that this reduction will soon show itself first in the rapid ageing of our population, and secondly, as the older generation die off, in a steep decline in numbers. These tendencies are already clear. "We entered this war with a little over 41,000,000 souls, or roughly 4,500,000 more than in 1914. Nevertheless, we had over 2,000,000 *fewer* children under 14 to care for, but 2,500,000 *more* people over 60 to provide for than before the last war." If we accept the reasonable but, of course, hypothetical assumptions of Dr. Charles, "in 30 years' time (1970) *only* 24 *people in each* 100 *will be under* 30, while total numbers will have declined to 34,000,000." In 1938, with 41,000,000 people, the proportion under 30 had dropped to 46; while in 1911, 57 in every 100 people out of a total population of 36,000,000 were below the age of 30. The war is likely still further to differentiate against youth. Those who easily assume that we are "overpopulated" and can do very well with an emptier Britain are apt to forget what it felt like in Hamelin after the Pied Piper had passed by.

Now there are some who look at this parents' revolt and decide that it means the twilight of the human race. They are at least right that "Western man" stands no chance in the future if this decline continues throughout most of Europe, America and Australia and no similar development appears in Asia. In Europe Catholicism and Fascism have alike failed to stop the decline. Mussolini and the Irish priests have been equally unable to put a stop to a tendency which is rooted deep in a world of war, instability, unemployment, economic depression and spiritual discouragement. Germany must be considered in a different category. By immense efforts Hitler has made some impression on the German birthrate. The birthrate, say the Nazis with truth, is a *Willensfrage*; its decline is "a symptom of a disease of the will, the decay of faith, the denial of life." To counter this, every device of propaganda and every inducement of economic advantage has been strained in Germany to maintain the supply of *Herrenvolk*. No passage of *Parents Revolt* is more interesting than its summary of Nazi efforts to increase the birthrate. They include the direct encouragement of promiscuity. The results of this propaganda were not negligible before the war; Germany was not replacing her population, but she was more nearly doing so than the rest of us. With the end of the "bloodless war" this temporary and partial increase seems to have come to an end and the fall during the war itself seems to have been swift.

Outside the West, then, where the population declines, we are left with the colossal speed of increase in India and (probably) still in China and the no less remarkable increase in the Soviet Union. In India and China the millions multiply as human beings and rabbits have always done before the discovery of conscious control. In the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, the rapid growth of population is due without doubt to social improvement combined with a belief in the new form of society. Plato, Mr. and Mrs. Titmuss remind us, said that "the penalty that good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men." If we cannot make our society worth living in, it will revert to a slave society and the birthrate problem will be tackled by the Hitlers and their successors and imitators. If that happens, since the birthrate is the one sphere of human relations difficult to control from the centre, the human race may decline in numbers as fast as it decays in civilisation.

Mr. and Mrs. Titmuss urge that the decline of population will not be stopped by "bribing parents." Decline is inevitable in a society in which all the emphasis is on individual competition and all the bias against a co-operative life. Mrs. Sidney Webb, who contributes a Preface, states the essential truth, if with an excessive simplicity, when she says that the solution lies in substituting the principle of "From each man according to his faculty, and to each man according to his need" for the principle of "each man for himself and devil take the hindmost." She concludes: "This principle is carried out by the Soviet Union and the authors suggest that, by the end of this century, its population may be some three hundred millions of well-educated and healthy human beings." *Parents Revolt* supports this general argument, but Mr. and Mrs. Titmuss hold, quoting the example of Sweden's very enlightened and democratic population policy that the Western democracies are not necessarily doomed to extinction.

TOM PAINE

WORDS, WORDS

A Word in Your Ear. By IVOR BROWN. *Cape.* 6*s.*

Barkable, cit, chevisance, floosie, frisgig, halcyon, hebetude, margarine, nesh, perdu, pudge, seely, tourbillion, wamble, yerk . . . These are a few headings from Mr. Ivor Brown's "anthology of words." Some of his words are expressive, some lovely, some alarming, some debased or obsolete, some merely odd; he has collected a hundred and eighty of them and written a paragraph about each. Do you enjoy the verbiage of Roget and Oxford? Then "hortulan" (absent by the way, from the first) will delight you. It applies to the landscape gardening of the Villa d'Este and Versailles, and Mr. Brown quotes in illustration from the syllabus of *Elysium Britannicum*, a projected work of Evelyn.

> 5. Of Knots, Parterres, Compartments, Borders and Embossments.—6. Of Walks, Terraces, Carpets, and Alleys, Bowling-greens, Malls, their materials and proportions.—7. Of Groves, Labyrinths, Daedales, Cabinets, Cradles, Pavilions, Galleries, Close-walks, and other Relievos.—8. Of Transplanting.—9. Of Fountains, Cascades, Rivulets, Piscinas, and Water-Works.—10. Of Rocks, Grots, Cryptas, Mounts, Precipices, Porticos, Vendiducts.—11. Of Statues, Columns, Dials, Perspectives, Pots, Vases, and other ornaments.—12. Of Artificial Echos, Music, and Hydraulic fountains.—13. Of Aviaries, Apiaries, Vivaries, Insects.—14. Of Orangeries, and Conservatories of Rare Plants.—15. Of Verdures, Perennial-Greens, and perpetual Springs.—16. Of Coronary Gardens, Flowers and rare Plants, how they are to be propagated, governed and improved; together with a Catalogue of the choicest Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers, and how the Gardener is to keep his Register.—17. Of the Philosophico-Medical Garden.

Like much "hortulan" writing this belongs rather to literature than to gardening. Mr. Brown leaves it with "Here's richness," and a query about the Philosophico-Medical style. He would find delectable answers in the pamphlets of the time; there was even a *Spiritual Uses of an Orchard*, written by Ralph Austen, a professional gardener. Evelyn, as a matter of fact, is comparatively restrained.

A critical or very exact account of words is usually not part of Mr. Brown's intention. He enjoys, he weaves round his enjoyment, he offers a cocoon which the reader can nurse at will into a butterfly. To give an idea of the infectious charm that anyone sensitive to the English language will find in this anthology, I quote one of its little essays whole:

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MICHING.

Miching is skulking, hiding, or thieving. Perhaps Herrick had both shades of meaning in mind when he wrote

"A cat
I keep, that plays about my house,
Grown fat
With eating many a miching mouse."

Hamlet's "Miching mallecho" is usually interpreted as secret mischief.

"Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries?" asks Falstaff, thinking rather of trespass.

The same poem of Herrick's, by the way, has a curious verb for the fruitful hen.

"A hen
I keep, which, creeking day by day,
Tells when
She goes her long white egg to lay."

Herrick, like Clare, two centuries later, is a great minter of words. Out of his treasury tumble ancient and modern pieces. His "Once a virgin flosculet," for example, is a very classical bud, but Herrick sometimes sets Latin moving on tip-toe instead of using the heavy Roman tread.

One goes on thinking about Herrick, blackberries, the creeking hen (not, by the way, a curious but a perfect phrase), Falstaff, Clare and mallecho. Nearly all these essays, or notes, start a few good rockets.

Take *A Word in Your Ear* at its own level of discursive enjoyment and there's not much more to be said. Mr. Brown is intoxicated by Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton; has a thread of Scots homespun; writes very well himself in the school of C. E. Montague; has hit on ways of improving entries in the big Oxford Dictionary; allows himself a portly exuberance and comes down bang on the lingo of commerce and officialdom.

But, as I have said, he starts the reader thinking. Some of his statements are inaccurate, others quite untrue. "Words always seem to come down in the world," he writes, "and I have sought in vain for one that has risen in esteem, that is to say a word whose meaning has gone from slight to serious or indifferent to important." And this is repeated, as an axiom, elsewhere. But Mr. Brown can't have looked very far; there are words in his own book that have come up in the world. "Chevisance," misused or appropriated by Spenser for enterprise, meant really shiftiness; "luxury" was once synonymous with lechery. And outside Mr. Brown's collection, without beating the bounds of language, one could cite: Tory (half-savage bogtrotter in Ireland professing to support the King), bard (beggar), handsome (dexterous, handy), peer (associate, equal), ecstasy (in the sense of madness), romantic (wildly sentimental, absurd), etc. Not all words are immortal; metaphors flower and die, to be pressed between covers; anyone to-day can "quail" without being swept up by the boldness of the image. But Shakespeare didn't know an aeroplane, or Chinese boxes, or a sea-horse. While old words crumble new ones spring up; the commonest go on unchanged, of the rest a majority decline, but others again rise. There is no single history that covers all. A good example of a word, without emotional flavour, that has since gained in importance is provided by Massinger:

"We'll dine in the great room; but let the music
And banquet be prepared here."

—"banquet" meaning the dessert and wine following. This example is quoted in Trench's *Select Glossary*; the others in my list come from Bradley's *The Making of English* and Pearsall Smith's *Words and Idioms*—not very inaccessible works. Then why hasn't Mr. Brown troubled to refer to them? Partly, I think, that he enjoys putting out feelers and withdrawing them; partly also that he loses his curiosity when prejudice is aroused. His view of language is sentimental, intoxicated, backward-looking, and facts that might stick a pin in him he either doesn't come upon or instinctively avoids.

His favourite word-makers are Shakespeare (the sweeter Shakespeare), Spenser, Milton. These were, indeed, prodigious inventors. But there have been others, not so congenial to Mr. Brown, and when it comes to modern writers his list trails off: Housman, Blunden . . . In general, despite his addiction to words, Mr. Brown seems oddly insensitive to verbal magic among his contemporaries. Who in the last fifty years have been the most word-intoxicated of English writers? Joyce and Virginia Woolf, without a doubt; and before them, Meredith and Hopkins. But while regretting the decay, etc., of language Mr. Brown doesn't mention any of these; or rather, there is one passing reference to Hopkins. And the most word-intoxicated critic? Logan Pearsall Smith. Again, Mr. Brown doesn't seem to have learnt from him. He is engaged in looking back to Elizabethan glories out of our grey, grey present.

However, such reflections do not spoil the discoveries one makes by reading *A Word in Your Ear*. Jugulate, to cut the throat of, applied by Thackeray to opera-singing, is delicious. And there are stolchy, pow, caravel.

G. W. STONIER

HUMANE LAWYERS

The Pollock-Holmes Letters. *Cambridge University Press.* Vols. 1 and 2. 36s.

These letters between Sir Frederick Pollock and Mr. Justice Holmes from 1874 to 1932 will interest everyone who personally knew them on both sides of the Atlantic, all lawyers, all readers who remember a golden age when one could meditate and pursue knowledge without being disturbed by raucous cads and ear-splitting noises, and finally all who are interested in the history of Anglo-American relations for the last fifty years.

Sir John Pollock has written an excellent introduction with vivid sketches not only of his father and Wendell Holmes but also of many other friends, like George Meredith, and it contains a pleasant dissertation on good talk and good talkers. He does not, however, explain everything as, for instance, the extraordinary size of his father's postcards. Judging by the length of these communications the postcards must have been gigantic.

This correspondence is only one instance of Pollock's genius for collaboration, of which there are two other examples, namely, *The History of English Law*, which he wrote with Maitland, and *Etchingham Letters*, a novel which he wrote with Mrs. Fuller Maitland. In the first book Maitland wrote far more of the text; but he always said that he could not have written it without Pollock's learning and aptitude for classification. The *Etchingham Letters* differ from the *Pollock-Holmes Letters* because the writers really answer each other, whereas both Holmes and Pollock in reply often do not take much notice of the items in the letters which they are answering. No doubt each knew quite well that the letter would interest the other writer, whether he replied in detail to him or not. Each writer's point of view is rather different. Pollock, though very practical in affairs, lived as regards the law in a rather academic world and there are not a few decisions about which his sentiment was "Victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni," as in the case of *Derry v. Peek*.

There is a legend that Pollock, briefed in a Privy Council case, was told by the solicitors that the Court was waiting for his reply to an opponent, on which he said, "No reply is necessary; I have never heard such nonsense in my life." Holmes on the other hand was immersed in legal practice but always interested in Pollock's theories and in his books outside the law, such as

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that on Spinoza. Holmes was by no means the type of lawyer who regards the law purely as a money-making machine and has no interest in its history or origins.

There is no doubt that both men contributed enormously to the harmony of Anglo-American relations. Pollock's wonderful achievement in clarifying the thorny and tangled problem of the Venezuelan question saved both countries from a situation which might easily have tumbled into war, especially after President Cleveland's violent speech, which according to the gossip of the time was due to wanting to draw a red herring over some minor domestic scandal about himself.

Pollock also did valuable work in expounding the Monroe Doctrine and there is no doubt that the links between this country and the U.S.A. are firmly welded by the same sort of legal system and what purports to be the same language. American soldiers and sailors now have their own law; but some interesting instructions have recently been issued to American soldiers and sailors in regard to the use of the English language. They are, for instance, warned that they will give offence if they say to an Englishman, "You look like a *bum*," which is American for loafer. One is reminded of the blind Madame du Deffand fingering *more suo* Edward Gibbon's features on making his acquaintance and then with an angry recoil shouting to the introducer, "Monsieur, c'est une mauvaise plaisanterie." On the whole, however, thinkers like Pollock and Holmes speak the same language and think along the same lines, and men of their calibre, as, for instance, Page and Spring-Rice, saved the situation through very critical moments in the last war.

Professor Howe's editing is a fine piece of work. Like Pollock he displays the most versatile erudition and helps the reader to enjoy to the full letters full of topical and legal and literary allusions.

E. S. P. HAYNES

VICTIMS

America's Own Refugees. By HENRY HILL COLLINS, JR. *Humphrey Milford.* 18s. 6d.

Mr. Collins has written an admirable book. Many people have been made familiar with the problem of the migratory family in the United States from seeing or reading Mr. Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*. But Mr. Collins makes it clear that the refugee from the dust-bowl is only a part of the problem. It is urban, hardly less than rural. He touches states in the East and the North-West as well as in the Middle-West and the South. These four millions, only a small part of whom the defence programme is likely to put to work, are a challenge to the very foundations of the historic economic system of America. They constitute the decisive proof not only that the age of the frontier has passed, but, also, that there is hardly a sphere of American life in which the big business interests are not predominant. Even the famous A.A.A. of Mr. Henry Wallace tended, on the whole, to benefit agricultural monopoly rather than the small farmer.

Mr. Collins has painted a deeply moving picture of their plight. He shows vividly how the problem of relief has so transcended the resources of the individual states, that a law of settlement has developed as harsh and as inflexible as the unreformed poor law in this country. The poverty of the migrant means ill-health. His housing, where he has a shack of some kind, at least equals, and not seldom surpasses, the worst of our slums. The number of the migrants' children who can hope for any continuous education is small, with the result that illiteracy is on the increase in America. A large proportion of them is disfranchised; and, though this is partly due to absence on seasonal labour, no inconsiderable part of it is due to southern poll-taxes, the effect of which is largely to confine the vote in the south to white people with fixed jobs or with property. A minority, in fact, of the white population in the Southern States determines political policy for the whole. Trade unionism has made little progress amongst them. There are few States into which they move in which they are not harried hither and thither. If, as in the picking season, in California or Florida, they try by concerted action to improve their conditions, they are pretty certain to find that the police are in fact the agents of their employers. It is a grim record that Mr. Collins has to unfold.

The Federal Government has embarked upon great schemes to cope with the problem. Soil erosion is being tackled; great irrigation schemes like Coulie Dam seek to bring new areas under cultivation; model camps are established on the main routes through which they pass. Mr. Collins has no difficulty in showing that none of the efforts begins to be, either in volume or in speed, proportionate to the size of the problem. And much of the creative thought that goes into their making is undone by the time that Congress has amended them. Here, as so often, civilisation is sacrificed to the legislative belief that the taxpayer likes a penny-wise policy even when it is demonstrable that it does not pay.

There are, in short, four million people to whom the President's Four Freedoms are empty abstractions. Hundreds of thousands of them are the descendants of the pioneers who conquered the American wilderness; hundreds of thousands more are the hapless victims either of the reckless waste of natural resources or the greed inherent in the system against which, at its best, the New Deal was so striking a protest. Mr. Collins sets out some of the remedies by which it is proposed to deal with the evils he describes. It is tempting to remark two things about them. First, it is clear that the psychological mood in which Congress approaches these conditions is altogether obsolete in their regard, since it assumes, as in the treatment of P.W.A., that any American citizen can find work if only he looks hard enough for it; a grim legend which not even the great depression has destroyed. Second, one is bound to ask oneself whether a determination to tackle issues of this magnitude is not an index of importance to the future of America in world-affairs. For reconstruction, like charity, begins at home. A nation that is to preside over the destinies of peace abroad needs to set its own house in order if it is to have freedom and energy for great international tasks. One cannot avoid the suspicion that the interests which have been responsible for so much of the grim tragedy that Mr. Collins has described are the interests, also, which will seek to shape the post-war position of the United States in the world-scene.

HAROLD J. LASKI

ARAGON AGAIN

Les yeux d'Elsa. Par ARAGON. Collection des Cahiers du Rhône. Editions de la Baconnière. Neuchâtel.

It is good news that *Horizon* and *La France Libre* are jointly producing an edition of Aragon's *Le crève-coeur*. The quotations I was able to give from this book excited even more interest than I could have hoped; and I am therefore encouraged to write now about Aragon's new volume, *Les yeux d'Elsa*, of which a copy has been lent to me. (I must warn the many readers who asked to borrow *Le crève-coeur* that I am not in a position to lend them the new book.) I believe that *Le crève-coeur* was at least partially suppressed in France—it was too patriotic; and *Les yeux d'Elsa* has been published in Switzerland, where writers of French still enjoy some liberty of speech. "Arma virumque cano" is the heading of the preface, though this is chiefly concerned with the technique of versification: and the poems are more often inspired by France than by the Elsa of the title. Here is a passage from *La nuit de Dunkerque*:

Sûr que seuls m'entendront ceux qui la faiblesse eurent
De toujours à leur coeur préférer sa blessure
Moi du moins je crierai cet amour que je dis
Dans la nuit on voit mieux les fleurs d'incendie

* * *

Les soldats ont creusé des trous grandeur nature
Et semblent essayer l'ombre des sépultures
Visages de cailloux Postures de déments
Leur sommeil a toujours l'air d'un pressentiment

Les parfums du printemps le sable les ignore
Voici mourir le Mai dans les dunes du Nord

In *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* we are shown the fear and the silence that reign in both zones of France; and the unspoken, ubiquitous hope:

Faut-il garder le compte de chaque heure
Haïr moi qui n'avais jamais haï
On n'est plus chez soi même dans son coeur
O mon pays est-ce bien mon pays . . .

Je ne dois pas dire ce que je pense
Ni murmurer cet air que j'aime tant
Il faut redouter même le silence
Et le soleil comme le mauvais temps

Ils sont la force et nous sommes le nombre
Vous qui souffrez nous nous reconnaissons
On aura beau rendre la nuit plus sombre
Un prisonnier peut faire une chanson . . .

Tous les Français ressemblent à Blondel
Quel que soit le nom dont nous l'appelions
La liberté comme un bruissement d'ailes
Répond au chant de Richard Coeur-de-Lion

In *L'escale* he paints France as an Andromeda:

De quel prédestiné Dame de délivrance
Attends-tu sur la pierre noire la venue
Blanche à qui l'acier bleu cercle les poings menus
Où saignent les rubis d'un bracelet garance
Les marins regardaient cette femme inconnue
Etrangement parée aux couleurs de souffrance
Attachée au récif bordé d'indifference
Si belle qu'on tremblait de voir qu'elle était nue

Here the tricolor—*couleurs de souffrance*—is indicated in terms that would be precious if they did not signify the secrecy needful now in allusions of the Republic. ("Garance," madder, is the special red of the old French private's trousers.) Throughout, the book makes one aware of the precautions a Frenchman must now take even in his dreams. "Certain que la nuit n'est pas longue à cause du matin"; "Et je saurai baisser le front pour obéir", "Me tenir à côté de l'étrier du traître", "Soleil du devenir brûlante discipline, J'aime et je ne dirai qui d'une amour aveuglée."

The volume includes passages of wit, but as in *Le crève-coeur*, the tragedy of France gives his poetry an impetus, a directness, an amplitude, and a frank grandeur that had disappeared from contemporary verse. The most beautiful of the new poems, to my sense, is *Plus belle que les larmes*, in which the figure of France is constructed of images taken from the various provinces.

Vous pouvez condamner un poète au silence
Et faire d'un oiseau du ciel un galérien
Mais pour lui refuser le droit d'aimer la France
Il vous faudrait savoir que vous n'y pouvez rien . . .

N'a-t-elle pas ces bras que l'on voit aux statues
Au pays de la pierre où l'on fait le pain blond
Douce perfection par quoi se perpétue
L'ombre de Jean Racine à La Ferté-Milon

Le sourire de Rheims à ses lèvres parfaites
Est comme le soleil à la fin d'un beau soir . . .

Il y a dans le vent qui vient d'Arles des songes
Qui pour en parler haut sont trop près de mon coeur
Quand les marais jaunis d'Aunis et de Saintonge
Sont encore rayés par les chars des vainqueurs

Le grand tournoi des noms de villes et provinces
Jette un défi de fleurs à la comparaison . . .

And so through the Durance, Normandy and Brittany we come to the poet's home, "Paris qui n'est Paris qu'arrachant ses pavés." Here is the magnificent end:

Et des rosiers

Dans les feuilles j'entends le galop d'une course
Arrete-toi fileuse Est-ce mon coeur trop plein
L'espoir parle à la nuit le langage des sources
Ou si c'est un cheval et si c'est Dugueslin

Qu'importe que je meure avant que se dessine
Le visage sacré s'il doit renaître un jour
Dansons ô mon enfant dansons la capucine
Ma patrie est la faim la misère l'amour

Significant, finally, the following stanza. (A "rémouleur" is a sharpener of knives, and King Francis was taken prisoner in 1525 by Charles V

at Pavia—but two years later the French sacked the city.)

Puisque vivre n'a su me saoûler de la vie
Et qu'on n'est pas tué d'une grande douleur
Préparez les couteaux Voici le rémouleur
François le roi, François n'est pas mort à Pavie

In some of these poems Aragon has developed an elaborate system of interior rhyming, which is of great technical interest, because it enriches and aggravates the emotional impact. In his preface and appendices he is concerned with such inventions, and with the poets of the twelfth century, who spread the imagination of France over Western Europe. (He takes a particular topical pleasure in reiterating the name of the greatest authority upon Chrétien de Troyes—the name is Cohen.) To the troubadours and to Camoens, to La Fontaine, to Mallarmé and to Apollinaire, his indebtedness is avowed. It is indeed a consummate and even erudite craftsmanship that has enabled him to communicate his ardours. There are other poets here as well as in France whose courage and whose love of lost or endangered liberty are not less than his. But Aragon has outstripped all others that I know of by finding for the cry of his heart a music and an imagery that remain with the reader. How often since I first read *Le crève-coeur* have I found myself murmuring

O mois des floraisons, mois des métamorphoses
Mai qui fut sans nuage et Juin poignardé

or

Et son refrain comme un pied nu
Troubla l'eau verte du silence

Lines I have quoted above will, I fancy, similarly find in the mind a continuing place.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

Week-end Competitions

No. 657

Set by William Whitebait

You are asked to provide limericks for famous pictures. The limericks may be of any sort, gay, savage or serious, but they must be printable. Competitors are specially warned about this.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, September 14th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

REPORT ON COMPETITION No. 654

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Tennyson's *The Daisy* celebrates memories of foreign travel in a metre not, I think, elsewhere used in English. Competitors are invited to write three stanzas in the same metre and on a similar theme.

Report by Raymond Mortimer

Though none of the competitors suggests that the metre of *The Daisy* was used before Tennyson, several point out that the lines *To the Rev. F. D. Maurice* are similar. But there is a difference; in *The Daisy* the last line of each stanza begins with an iamb, in the other poem with a trochee. No reference is made to the metre of either in Saintsbury's three-volume *History of English Prosody*. The entries show how tricky the metre is to handle, and a number of competitors sent ordinary iambic tetrameters, with a feminine ending to the third line. The sights commemorated were very various: "Spires on the plain of Serajevo" (Neil A. V. McCormick), "The murky depths of Severn Tunnel" (Nancy Gunter), "O blue Cancale—those oyster lunches" (Margaret Evans), "The succulent avocado pear" (Guy Innes), "Where Saint Helena's harsh cliffs loom" (Veritas), "Lough Ennel and the woods of Cong" (Thomas Bodkin), "Piero's lovely death of Procris" (Sir Robert Witt). Singapore in this war and Dunkirk in the last were remembered; Pibwob sang the London suburbs, R. W. Ketton-Cremer an air journey to Sweden, G. J. Blundell was also good. Willy Tadpole sent three entries, all happily Tennysonian, none flawless in diction; Leslie Johnson had a good notion, but his verse is a little pedestrian (so, he may say, was Swift's); J. Taylor is excellent, and though I think brougham a monosyllable, the Oxford dictionary allows it also to be a dissyllable. Incomparably the best poem comes from F. C. C., but the eighth line has the distinctive extra beat missing. For this negligence a fine must be imposed, and I recommend that to F. C. C. go a first prize of only one guinea, and that half a guinea each be sent to Willy Tadpole, Leslie Johnson and J. Taylor.

If any future, Love, were sure,
Be ours to hear with rapture pure
Like Open Sesame resounding
Messieurs les voyageurs, en voiture!
Safe in our wagon-fit a-sway,
That *Non spergersi* to obey
(Ah, stern belov'd trilingual measure)
Nicht hinauslehnen all the way.

What shall we see with dawn begun
And the black night of Europe done?
Beyond Vallorbe the Alps arising,
The bridge at Avignon in the sun?

(F. C. C.)

LEMUEL MUSES.

On journeys four he casts his mind,
Restored to home, he shuns his kind.
To nobler race he owes allegiance;
His heart with them he has left behind.

He sees again the pygmy folk
Who bound him fast before he woke,
His giant nurse, the floating island,
The doomed immortals, that cruel joke.

But most he thinks of graceful bays
Of sorrel nags and dappled greys,
And dreads the fate he sees before him:
With loathed Yahoos he must end his days.

(LESLIE JOHNSON)

With hardly more than five days run
We sighted, rising one by one,
The unbelievable sky-scrapers
Like visors set on the staring sun.

And hailed the land where all are free,
A giantess out of the sea,
An adamantine Aphrodite
Whose loins were aching with Liberty.

She bade us welcome. We were sent
Down long ravines all refluent
With roaring sound of many motors
That everlastingly came and went.

(WILLY TADPOLE)

MANCHESTER IN 1888.

In Manchester what hours we knew
I and that sleek Victorian Jew!
What palmy days of cotton-booming,
Of Belle, and a plush-lined Deansgate stew.

At dawn we heard clogs clatter by
And turned round for another lie
Behind the Nottingham lace curtains
Below the smoked Mancunian sky.

And then to 'Change, and then to feed
(O, whiskered, prime, top-hatted breed!)
In days of gals and ostrich feathers
Of landaus, broughams and steam-drawn speed.

(J. TAYLOR)

COMPANY MEETING

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THE 51st ordinary general meeting of Furness, Withy and Co., Ltd., was held on Sept. 2 in London, the Lord Essendon, J.P. (the chairman) presiding.

The following are extracts from the statement by the chairman circulated with the report and accounts:

The position, as disclosed by the accounts will, I feel sure, be satisfactory to stockholders. The net profit, after making provision for taxation, amounts to £608,888, a decrease on the previous year of £61,688, which is accounted for by a corresponding reduction in the earnings of the ships as compared with those of the previous year. The directors recommend the payment of a dividend on the Ordinary stock of 6 per cent., less income tax, which is the same distribution as the previous year.

A few weeks ago, whilst on a hurried visit to the United States, I had the opportunity of seeing our New York organisation, and I am glad to report that they were in full swing and doing a huge volume of work most useful to the war effort. I noticed a grim determination to leave nothing undone which could further the ultimate victory of the Allies.

This is not the time to indulge in any forecast as to the future of the industry. Shipowners are wholeheartedly devoting all their energies towards the quick turn round of ships and, so far as the industry itself is concerned, they rely on the promise given by the Government that they will recognise "the necessity of maintaining the British Mercantile Marine in adequate strength and in a position of full competitive efficiency."

The report was adopted.

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Entertainments

DANCE at Royal Hotel, Southampton Row, Sat., Sept. 12th, at 6.30. Harry Flaum's Swingtet. Guest of Honour, Beatrix Lehmann. Guest Artist: MARTIN LAWRENCE. Licensed bar. Tickets 2s. 6d., Russia To-day Society, Central Group, 150 Southampton Row.

UNITY Theatre. Revue "Get Cracking." Every Thurs., Fri., Sat., Sun. at 7 p.m. Tickets 2s., 3s., 4s. Mems. only. Sub. 2s. Bus. 5391. 1 Goldington St., N.W.1.

ARTS Theatre (Tem. 7541), evs., 7.30 (exc. M.), S. and Sun., 3.0 p.m. Chesterton's "Magic" (Mems. only). Partics. from Sec.

ORPHEUM, Golders Green. SPE. 9741. Sun. next (6th), at 7 p.m. The London Symphony Orchestra; Mendelssohn: Overture, Athalie. Mahler: Songs of a Wayfarer. Tschaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet. Brahms: Symphony No. 3. Glinka: Overture, Russlan and Ludmilla. Conductor: Dr. Heinz Unger. Contralto: Sabine Kalter. All seats bookable, 6s., 5s., 4s., 3s., 2s., and 1s. 6d.

WIGMORE Hall, W.1. Under the auspices of the French National Committee. Thursday next, Sept. 10th, at 6.15 p.m. Debussy: En blanc et noir—Lindaraja—Rhapsodie et piece pour clarinette—Trois Ballades de Villon. Chabrier: Mélodies—Trois Valses romantiques-Espana; Mary and Geraldine Peppin, Rudolph Dunbar, Gaston Richer, Gerald Moore. Tickets: 10s., 7s. 6d., 5s., 2s. 6d. from Wigmore Hall (WELbeck 2141).

DANCE, Saturday, September 5th, Alan Kane and his orchestra, cabaret, Royal Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1. Dancing 7–11. Tickets 2s. 6d., Unity Theatre, 1 Goldington St., N.W.1. EUSton 5391.

Exhibitions, Lectures and Meetings

ARTISTS of Fame and Promise. 2nd Exhibition with new Works. LEICESTER GALLERIES, Leicester Square. 10–5.30. Sats. 10–1.

HOGARTH Group Exhbn., 216 Camden High St. Sept. 5th-23rd, 3–7 p.m. Talks: Weds., 9th, 16th, 23rd, 6.30 p.m.

3 Polish Artists: Henryk Gotlib, Marek Zulawski, Tadeusz Koper. Paintings and Sculpture. At AGNEWS, 43 Old Bond St., W.1.

FREEDOM for India. Public Meeting, Conway Hall, W.C.1, on Monday, Sept. 7th, at 7 p.m. John Middleton Murry, Reginald Sorensen, M.P., Sybil Morrison, Howard Whitten, Stuart Morris. Admission free. Collection. London area of P.P.U.

A SCHOOL Course in Hygiene, including Sex Education. 4 lectures by MISS ZOE DAWE on practical application in elementary schools. 6.15 p.m. Mons., Sept. 14th, 21st, 28th, and Oct. 5th. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., Holborn. Fee 5s. complete course, at first meeting, or to Trevor Dickeson, 4, Moor Lane, Rickmansworth.

W.E.A. London Central Branch. Saturday School on Educational Reform. Speaker: PROF. J. H. NICHOLSON (Principal of Hull University). Chairman: BARBARA WOOTTON. Saturday, Sept. 12th, 3 p.m. Alliance Hall, Carter Street, S.W.1 (St. James's Park Station). Admission free.

NORTH London Fabian Society. Inaugural Meeting Monday, 14th September, 7.30 p.m., at "Glenlyn," 10 Mount View Road, Crouch Hill, N.4. Organising Secretary, Fabian Society, Gwynn Jones, will speak on "Present Political Situation." Bus 212 from Finsbury Park and Muswell Hill; Bus 41 from Archway Tube Station. All enquiries to the Secretary: 3–6 Northwood Hall, N.6. (Tel.: MOUntview 8772).

SOUTH Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Sunday Meetings, 11 a.m. September 6: Prof. G. W. KEETON, M.A., LL.D., "The Beginning of the Fourth Year."

SOVIET Tuesdays at the British Drama League Studio, 9 Fitzroy Square, W.1. September 8, 7.30 p.m. Rev. J. PUTTERILL, "Religion." Admission free.

W.E.A. London Central Branch. Classes at National Trade Union Club, 12 Great Newport Street, W.C.1 (Leicester Square Station): "Social Economics," Mondays, 6.30 p.m. First meeting, Sept. 14th. "Social Psychology," Tuesdays, 6.30 p.m. First meeting, Sept. 15th. "Literature and Drama," Thursdays, 6.30 p.m. First meeting Sept 17th. "Musical Appreciation," Mondays, 6.30 p.m. 28 Woburn Square, W.C.1. First meeting, Sept. 14th. Further particulars from Hon. Sec., OLIVE BOWTELL, 11 Yew Tree Gardens, Epsom, Surrey.

W.E.A. West London Branch. "Social Economics," by Barbara Wootton, Fulham Central Library, 598 Fulham Road, on Tuesdays, 7 p.m. First meeting, Sept. 8th. "Psychology," by Renee Hurstfield, Fulham Central Library, Wednesdays, 7 p.m. First meeting, Sept. 2nd. "Literature (Modern Drama)," by John Greenwood, Ethical Hall, Queensway, W.2. Tuesdays, 7 p.m. First meeting, Sept. 15th. All the above are tutorial classes of 24 meetings. Further particulars from Hon. Sec., BARBARA KYLE, 63 Sydney Street, S.W.3.

JOHN McGOVERN, M.P., Fenner Brockway, A. Nath Bose, N. Datta-Majumdar, speak Holborn Hall, Sept. 8th, 7 p.m. FREE INDIA NOW!

F. A. RIDLEY on "Will America Rule the World?" at Austrian Club, 31 Broadhurst Gdns., N.W.3, on Sept. 10th, at 7.30 p.m.

"THE Whole Man," 3 lectures Besant Hall (entrance Rodmarton Mews), Blandford St., W.1. Wednesdays, 6 p.m. First lecture, Sept. 9th, "In Education," L. A. G. STRONG. Organised Theosophical Society in England. Collection

Lectures—continued

HAMPSTEAD Anglo-Soviet Committee. Series of Lectures. First two at St. George's Hall, Kingsgate Road, N.W.6, 8 p.m. Sat., Sept. 5, "Education in the U.S.S.R." Speaker: Mr. G. C. GILES, B.A., Headmaster Acton County School. Chair: Councillor Mrs. Carnegie. Sat., Sept. 12: "Religion in the U.S.S.R." Speaker: REV. STANLEY EVANS. Chair: Mr. Emile Burns. Entrance, 6d. and 1s.

Appointments Vacant and Wanted

None of the vacancies for women advertised in these columns relates to a woman between 18 and 31 unless such a woman (a) has living with her a child of hers under the age of 14, or (b) is registered under the Blind Persons Acts, or (c) has a Ministry of Labour permit to allow her to obtain employment by individual efforts.

THE British Council has vacancies in its Oxfordshire office for men and women of British nationality, well experienced in librarianship or the book trade, and not eligible for military service, to assist in selection of books and periodicals. Applications, giving full details of education, qualifications and experience (including knowledge of foreign countries and languages, if any) should be made to the Administration Secretary, The British Council, 3 Hanover Street, W.1.

IMPORTANT Industrial concern is willing to consider applications for employment from MEN who have been discharged from the Forces but whose general health is reasonably good, for training for POSTS overseas. Candidates must have had a Public School or University education, and have a knowledge of Chemistry up to Inter-B.Sc. standard. Preference will be given to men under 30 though no candidate will be rejected solely on account of his age. Write giving full particulars of education, experience and salary required to Box 324, c/o Dawson's, 31 Craven Street, London, W.C.2.

HERTFORDSHIRE County Council. The County Council propose to appoint a number of District Youth Organisers. Experience in Youth Work essential. Salary, Burnham Secondary Scale. Commencing salary within the scale according to experience. Applications (no forms issued) stating age, education and qualifications should be sent to the County Education Officer, County Hall, Hertford, before September 14th. Applications from women between 18–31 will not be entertained unless such a woman (*a*) has living with her a child of hers under the age of 14, or (*b*) has a Ministry of Labour permit to allow her to obtain employment by individual effort. ELTON LONGMORE, Clerk to the County Council.

ROCHDALE Education Committee. Girls' Club Leader. Applications are invited for the post of leader of the Rochdale Central Girls' Club. Training and experience essential. Salary £250 per annum, non-resident. Registration has produced a considerable increase in membership and there is opportunity for development. Applications giving full particulars of age, education, training and experience, together with testimonials and names of referees, should reach the Director of Education, Education Office, Townhead, Rochdale, not later than September 19th, 1942.

THE Greenwich Borough Council require a Warden for their War Time Nursery to be opened shortly at Conley Street. Applicants should have had some teaching or other special experience in looking after small children, especially those between the ages of 2 and 5. Salary £150 per year, or according to Burnham Scale if recognised by Board of Education as a teacher. Applications to M.O.H., Town Hall, S.E.10, not later than Sept. 7, 1942.

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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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BACK FROM MOSCOW

MR. CHURCHILL and Mr. Roosevelt have both spoken. Both have restated Allied determination to hasten the creation of that Second Front without which victory would seem indefinitely postponed. Mr. Roosevelt has spoken of a dozen different places on which an attack might be launched, and Mr. Churchill, impressed by the "inexorable and inflexible resolve of the Soviet Union to fight Hitlerism to the end," told the House of Commons that he believed he had convinced Stalin of the "loyal and sincere resolve" of Britain to bear a larger share of the burden of the German attack than Britain has done during the last twelve months. On this matter Mr. Churchill was refreshingly frank. He did not pretend that he and Stalin had enjoyed a honeymoon party; he referred to the rugged power of Stalin's personality, to his courage, will and lack of illusions, and to the sense of humour which, one gathers, saved their relationship. Mr. Churchill admitted that it was not surprising, in view of the suffering imposed by the German invasion and the weight of the Nazi attack, that Stalin should feel that neither Britain nor America has done enough so far "to take the weight off them." Of the various reasons for this failure Mr. Churchill reasonably emphasised a factor which is too seldom understood. "We are sea animals, and the United States are to a large extent ocean animals. Russians are land animals." Fortunately, he added, we are all three air animals. When all allowances have been made for the prejudices which have interfered with full co-operation between Russia and the Western democracies, all the traditions of training which have made the concept of European liberation so difficult for the British people, it is true that great land Powers do not readily comprehend the problems of strategy and man-power of a country whose capacities and indeed existence are conditioned by the primary need of free sea communications. That, however, does not answer the basic criticism—that the war could only end quickly if the Germans had to face a Western as well as an Eastern Front and that we have failed to create that Front though the opportunity has been apparent for twelve months.

Such considerations are naturally not uppermost in the Soviet Union when the best developed and most fertile districts of Russia are in German hands, and when the most terrible battle in history is even at this minute being fought for the key city of Stalingrad. On this Mr. Churchill was content to remark that it was already September 8th. It is true that every day that the Russians can defend Stalingrad improves the prospects of the United Nations. But it would be a mistake to imagine that weather will materially affect the fighting in this sector of the front for the next two months. It seems clear that the Russian diversions on the Moscow sector of the front have petered out, and that in spite of the losses that must have been inflicted on troops which continuously attack heavily defended positions the Germans have still men and material to wage this battle. There is not a moment's relaxation on the Russian front, not a moment when the people of Russia are not asking how soon the Western offensive will begin.

It is not obvious what M.P.s were expected to say about this or other parts of Mr. Churchill's report of his visit to Moscow and the Middle East. He was right in saying that relations with Moscow have passed the stage of words and will depend on our capacity for joint action. Nor is it surprising that few criticisms or comments were immediately made on Mr. Churchill's references to other fronts. The defence of Malta is rightly regarded as one of those heroic incidents which historians of the past have glorified into mankind's most brilliant achievement, but which we had vainly hoped were no longer necessary to prevent the forcible enslavement of free peoples.

Nor would any responsible Member of Parliament be anxious to comment on the change of command in the Middle East. Only events will prove whether the new appointments in Libya and the Middle East are satisfactory. With longer time to consider Mr. Churchill's speech some M.P.s might well have asked what his reference to the part that Britain could play in the Caucasus meant unless it was in an immediate action in conjunction with the Soviet forces; clearly, if the Russian side of the Caucasus falls there will be little part for the British to play in that area. A more serious point of criticism could have been found in Mr. Churchill's account of the borrowing of transports from America in which large numbers of troops had been taken to the Middle East to replace those who had been captured at Tobruk, and in the desert. If we had believed earlier in the Russian defence, and had not preferred an offensive in Libya to one in Europe, should we really have been as short of shipping for the Second Front as is so frequently alleged? To choose for an offensive a front which requires a voyage of three months is a curious form of economy at a time when the enemy's weakest point is only the width of the Channel from our shores. More significant still was Mr. Churchill's very fair claim that the R.A.F. was now a primary factor in beating back Rommel's offensive. We note once again how quickly necessity moves the High Command to steps which before a disaster had been condemned as the advice of amateur strategists. Those who urged that large numbers of bombers should be sent to the Western desert were told that both aerodromes and shipping accommodation to take the equipment were lacking. Yet after Tobruk the bombers arrived, and it is clear that they have played a vital part in checking the large-scale offensive which Rommel had planned. We note, incidentally, that Mr. Churchill spoke with sobriety about the bombing of Germany. There was no foolish boasting about reducing German towns to ashes, nor about reducing the Germans by terror.

Mr. Churchill has not changed. The part of this speech which moved him to eloquent imagery was his description of the strange battle in the Western Desert. Such fighting is to him not the loathsome necessity of our age, but the very essence of romance. Mr. Roosevelt showed himself nearer to the thoughts of the common man in a speech he made last week to a great international gathering of students. He knew the deep scepticism of our generation and he desired to reassure these young men and women from many Allied nations that this time our promises were